

The Reality of Gender Mainstreaming Implementation

The Case of the EU Research Policy

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The Reality of Gender Mainstreaming Implementation

The Case of the EU Research Policy

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Table of contents

Abbreviations	9
1. Introduction	11
1.1. Why study gender mainstreaming implementation in the EU research policy	11
1.2. The European Commission and RTD Framework Programmes	14
1.3. The development of the gender mainstreaming policy at European Union level	15
1.4. Gender mainstreaming in European research by the European Commission	17
1.5. Analytical framework and structure of the book	21
2. Theoretical framework to analyse gender mainstreaming by the European Commission	25
2.1. Approach to developing a theoretical framework	25
2.2. Existing fragments of institutional knowledge: characterising the European Commission	27
2.3. Fuzziness and ambiguity of concepts: meanings and interpretations in gender theory	34
2.4. Prerequisites and conditions for successful gender mainstreaming	46
2.5. Resistance to gender change	56
2.6. Gender mainstreaming implementation by the European Commission: what this work will investigate	64
3. Structural provisions and measures for implementing gender mainstreaming in the 6th Framework Programme	75
3.1. Method and data	75
3.2. Applicants / project holders	77
3.3. Proposal evaluators	85
3.4. Independent observers	93
3.5. Negotiators / Project officers	96
3.6. Descartes Prize evaluators and juries	100
3.7. National Contact Points	102
3.8. Civil Society Organisations / external gender experts	109
3.9. Conclusions in terms of capacity of the actors	111
4. Women in European research: equal opportunities	119
4.1. Method and data	119
4.2. Women's participation in European research: policy background	120
4.3. Women's participation in FP6 'Science and Society' and Social Sciences and Humanities fields	122
4.4. Women's participation across FP6 and across Framework Programmes	137
4.5. Women's participation in European research: findings from the ERA consultation	139
4.6. Conclusions regarding women's participation in European research	142

5. Gender in European research: mainstreaming gender in the projects	149
5.1. Method and data	149
5.2. Gender equality provisions in the research projects	154
5.3. Gender in the proposal and in the Evaluation Summary Report (ESR)	158
5.4. The gender dimension in European research projects	160
5.5. Science and Society reporting	178
5.6. Conclusions on mainstreaming gender in the projects	179
6. The ‘Gender Action Plan’: a new gender mainstreaming instrument	183
6.1. Method and data	184
6.2. Comparative analysis: presence and quality of GAPs in the SSH project proposals and in technical annexes	185
6.3. GAP quality as indicator of gender integration in the project	189
6.4. Implementation of GAPs	191
6.5. Opinions about the GAP from the field	193
6.6. Findings from the GenderBasic project in relation to the GAP	195
6.7. What other sources say about the Gender Action Plan	197
6.8. Conclusions regarding the Gender Action Plan	199
7. The case in context: the DG Research before, during and after FP6	205
7.1. Method and data	205
7.2. What came before: the running up to and the planning of FP6 (up to 2002)	206
7.3. Gender monitoring work in the context of a liquid bureaucracy	207
7.4. The DG Research and its commitment to gender equality: rhetorical or real? Stories about resistance	211
7.5. The gender monitoring studies at the end of FP6 and during the preparation of FP7	215
7.6. Framework Programme 7: from deceleration to a complete stop?	218
7.7. Conclusions from the insight in the process	220
8. The potential of gender mainstreaming implementation by the European Commission	223
8.1. Variability and unevenness in the gender mainstreaming implementation in FP6	223
8.2. Conceptualisation of the gender equality goal	225
8.3. Conditions for effective gender mainstreaming	228
8.4. Resistance	232
8.5. The institutional features and the local attitudes towards gender change	235
8.6. The way forward	238
References	241
Summary	249
Samenvatting	260
Curriculum Vitae	272

Abbreviations

CA	Coordination Action
CoE	Council of Europe
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DFID	(UK) Department for International Development
DG	Directorate-General
EAG	Expert and Advisory Groups
EC	European Commission
EMM	Expert Management Module
EPWS	European Platform of Women Scientists
ERA	European Research Area
ESR	Evaluation Summary Report
ETAN	European Technology Assessment Network
EU	European Union
FP	Framework Programme
GAP	Gender Action Plan
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIA	Gender Impact Assessment
GM	Gender Mainstreaming
HoU	Head of Unit
INFSO	Information Society
IP	Integrated Project
N	Number of responses
N/A	Not Applicable or No Answer
NCP	National Contact Point
NoE	Network of Excellence
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
R&D	Research and Development
RTD	Research and Technological Development
S&S	Science and Society
S&T	Science and Technology
SET	Science, Engineering, and Technology
SSA	Specific Support Action
SSH	Social Sciences and Humanities
STREP	Specific Targeted Research Project
WP	Work Package

1. Introduction

In this introductory chapter, I first explain why it is worthwhile from a scientific point of view to study gender mainstreaming implementation in the research policy field by the European Commission with an ‘institutionalist lens’. As I take the research policy domain as the focus of my case study, the next sections take a closer look at the institutional context. Section two presents the European Commission and the policy implementation framework, while section three sketches the history of gender mainstreaming by the European Commission and in particular in European research.

1.1. Why study gender mainstreaming implementation in the EU research policy

Gender, gender equality and gender mainstreaming are concepts from feminist theory that have been embraced at the policy making level as offering an alternative for the problematized existing situation of inequality between the sexes.¹ While gender mainstreaming has been taken up by institutional actors worldwide, most national and international organisations did so following the Fourth United Nations’ World Conference on Women in Beijing (in September 1995) where the Beijing Platform for Action was agreed upon. By adopting the Beijing Platform for Action, governments committed themselves to a strategy of mainstreaming gender perspectives throughout policy processes. Gender mainstreaming is thus rooted in the policy context.

A widely quoted definition of gender mainstreaming is the one from the Council of Europe’s Group of Specialists (Council of Europe, 1998) who defined gender mainstreaming as *‘the (re) organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and at all stages, by the actors normally involved in policy-making’*. This definition firmly places gender mainstreaming in the policy context, as part of a strategy to change policy processes.

After some years of implementation, it has become clear that the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming often remains below expectations. This has led to political and theoretical debates on issues and difficulties associated with ‘gender mainstreaming’ that might work as impeding factors for its effective implementation.

However, although much theory has been produced about gender mainstreaming, far less empirical academic research has been done on the successes or failures of the practice of gender mainstreaming. Gender mainstreaming is said to be theoretically promising, but is still regarded as ‘poorly developed’ where concrete specifications for its implementation are concerned (Benschop & Verloo, 2011). Scholars (Rees, 2005; Woodward, 2008) do recognise that most of the research that did look into the implementation of gender mainstreaming has

¹ This is further elaborated in section 2.3. of this work.

been published in what falls into the category of 'grey literature'. Unfortunately, the knowledge produced in such applied research only exceptionally (Moser & Moser, 2005) finds its way into academic debates, thus leaving a theory-practice gap. Academics may offer as a counter-argument that the grey literature is rather 'case-based' and not the result of carefully set up empirical research. Still, a critique that may actually be addressed to the existing academic theories about the implementation of gender mainstreaming is that their empirical bases tend to be rather meagre and the causal relations not always very clear between the theoretical conclusions and the observations made through the empirical analyses. As such, it can be argued that what exists is more grounded on reflexivity than on empiricism. While reflexivity is interesting and useful for the formulation of hypotheses, it is not enough.

Although there exists some academic research on gender mainstreaming implementation, most of this research covers the national level (Beveridge, Nott, & Stephen, 2000; McGauran, 2009; Roggeband & Verloo, 2006; Sainsbury & Bergqvist, 2009), while only a few compare a set of countries (Daly, 2005; Eveline & Bacchi, 2005; Yeandle, 1998). Thus far, only one feminist comparative research project undertook to study the whole EU (QUING)², but the focus of that study is not gender mainstreaming implementation. Amy Mazur (Mazur, 2009) compiled an interesting overview of recent feminist comparative research projects and observes that gender mainstreaming implementation is seriously understudied.

Despite the fact that gender mainstreaming implementation is an understudied object of research, its highly variable nature has been demonstrated (Daly, 2005; Woodward, 2008) and while gender theorists seem to accept the idea that gender mainstreaming may present itself in a variety of practices (Daly, 2005; Rees, 2005; Walby, 2004; Yeandle, 1998), they are at the same time wary of a too wide set of different practices carrying the label 'gender mainstreaming'. Rees (2005) points out the paradox between the high level of acceptance of gender mainstreaming, both at the institutional level and academically, and the considerable confusion about how to deliver gender mainstreaming among those who actually have to do it. This has, according to Rees, led to situations where the (occasional) application of specific tools associated with gender mainstreaming, often gender impact assessments, is assumed to constitute mainstreaming itself.

The variability identified in gender mainstreaming practices, demonstrated *inter alia* by research projects as MAGEEQ³ (Verloo & Pantelidou Maloutas, 2005) or EQUAPOL⁴ (both were EU-funded projects under FP5), suggests that at times there are problems with the implementation of gender mainstreaming and in other instances there do not appear to be problems. This observation is interesting and calls for further research.

² www.quing.eu

³ www.mageeq.net

⁴ www.equapol.gr

With this work, I will contribute to the study of gender mainstreaming implementation and more specifically to the understanding of why gender mainstreaming implementation can be variable and uneven, and lead to disappointing results. While, as set out above, the existing theories do not offer much guidance for such analysis and while their empirical grounds are rather loose, there are different theories that offer some useful arguments and these I will review. I furthermore argue that scholars generally tend to underestimate the impacts of the institutional context on the delivery of gender mainstreaming, while such institutional aspects do have an important influence on how gender mainstreaming is implemented and thus can help explain problems.

In this respect, I share the perspective of scholars like Fiona Mackay, Meryl Kenny, Louise Chappell and others who seek to develop what they call a 'systematic feminist institutionalism' (Kenny & Mackay, 2009) that it is worth to consider whether feminist political science can gain from paying more explicit attention to institutional aspects when studying policies and policy processes from a feminist perspective. Notably the attention for dynamic processes in different institutional contexts or, with the words of Kenny and Mackay, the interest of institutionalism in "temporality, relationality and contextuality" (2009) is appealing to feminist political scientists. I also agree with these feminist institutionalist scholars when they recognise that feminist scholarship has already developed rich insights on how gender relates to institutional aspects (notably as regards unequal power relations or resistance to change). It is thus interesting to collect from feminist theories these pieces of knowledge that together can contribute to feminist institutionalist thinking, notably by offering theoretical propositions for understanding the disappointing results of gender mainstreaming, and to apply these on the case that will be analysed. Thus, as I argue that gender mainstreaming implementation problems can be better understood when studied with an 'institutional lens', this is what I will do in this work, adopting a multi-disciplinary approach.

Having decided for a case study approach, the case to be analysed had to correspond to a number of criteria: 1) it needed to be a case of gender mainstreaming implementation; 2) the implementation of gender mainstreaming had to be variable and uneven; 3) the case needed to cover several years in order to allow for (lack of) impacts to be detectable and the temporal dimension to be analysable; 4) ideally, it was a case that others can relate to. Considering these criteria, it has been a logical choice to study the implementation of gender mainstreaming by the European Commission. As the European Commission is the executive branch of the European Union, and as such the locus of power when it comes to implementing EU policies, it is somewhat surprising that it has not attracted more the attention of feminist scholars. Especially since the European Commission is generally regarded as a body with a long-standing tradition as enabler and mobilising force for advancing gender equality, not only in the labour market but also in other domains like family policies, violence against women, and politics (Lombardo & Meier, 2007; Roth, 2008). It is as such an important actor, at the global scene regarded as a model, paving and showing the way for others (Pollack & Hafner-Burton, 2000; Zippel, 2004).

While, as stated above, academic publications addressing gender mainstreaming practice at the European Union (EU) level are utterly scarce, what exists confirms an uneven implementation also at that level (Hafner-Burton & Pollack, 2008; Pollack & Hafner-Burton, 2000; Stratigaki, 2005), marked by unequal take-up of the gender mainstreaming mandate by various DGs in the Commission, in turn leading to variability in policy outputs. In general, gender mainstreaming commitments and efforts undertaken by the European Commission are not seen to have yielded the expected impacts (Braithwaite, 2000; Bretherton, 2001; Pfister, 2007).

The core of my argument is that the European Commission is a liquid, compartmentalised, gendered bureaucracy and that this disposition affects its potential for effectively implementing gender mainstreaming. I will illustrate this empirically through the case analysis which focuses on gender mainstreaming in the EU research policy, a policy field that has been engaged with gender mainstreaming implementation already for a considerable number of years and which thus offers the opportunity of comparison over time. Moreover, since the coordination and funding of European research activities is organised in so-called ‘framework programmes’ that run over several years and which have a cyclic character, this makes the study of gender mainstreaming implementation in the research domain even more interesting as it allows to distinguish planning and implementation as different phases of the cycle.

Although initially promising in its adoption of gender mainstreaming (Pollack & Hafner-Burton, 2000), the European Commission’s Directorate-General for Research, which is in charge of managing the research framework programmes, has still not succeeded in producing significant progress in terms of gender equality. This has most recently been demonstrated by the Gender Monitoring Studies undertaken under the Sixth Framework Programme (European Commission, 2009).

1.2. The European Commission and RTD Framework Programmes

The European Commission is one of the three main EU institutions involved in the EU decision-making process, the others being the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union. The Commission’s role is to guard the common European interest. It is independent of national governments. It prepares decisions and makes legislative proposals; it manages and implements EU policies and the budget; it enforces European law (together with the Court of Justice) and it represents the Union on the international stage.⁵

The European Commission is organised in departments and services. Nowadays, there are eighteen so-called Directorates General, which are in charge of specific policy domains. Others deal with external relations. There are also general services (like communication, publications or statistics) and internal services (for example budget, interpretation or informatics). Directorates General are headed by Directors General, who may be assisted by one or more

⁵ http://europa.eu/institutions/inst/comm/index_en.htm (last accessed on 21 December 2010)

Deputy Directors General, and are composed of different Directorates (headed by a Director), which consist of units (headed by a Head of Unit).

Research as a policy domain is managed by the Directorate-General for Research, or shortly DG Research or also DG RTD (Research and Technological Development).

Currently (December 2010), the DG RTD is headed by a Director General, who is assisted by three advisors and three deputies. It counts fourteen Directorates.

Launched in 1984, the RTD Framework Programmes (in full Framework Programmes for Research and Technological Development) are the Union's main instrument for funding research in Europe. Framework Programmes originally covered a period of five years with the last year of one Framework Programme (FP) and the first year of the following FP overlapping. The FP that is currently running however (FP7) covers seven years instead of five (2007 to 2013). Their strategic objectives and structural provisions are reconsidered and 'fixed' in a legal base per Framework Programme: a Framework Programme is proposed by the European Commission and adopted by the Council and the European Parliament following a co-decision procedure. As such, the Framework Programmes can be seen as cycles in the longer term policy process.

While the DG RTD has the main responsibility for the management of the Framework Programmes, in carrying out its tasks it works together with other Commission departments such as the Joint Research Centre (which falls under the responsibility of the same Commissioner), the Directorates General for the Information Society, Energy and Transport, the Environment, Enterprise, and others. Each of these is also involved in the implementation of specific parts of the Framework Programmes.

1.3. The development of the gender mainstreaming policy at European Union level

At the European Union level, commitment to gender equality traces back to before the Beijing conference. Equal treatment of men and women was considered already at the time of the establishment of the European Economic Community in 1957, although interpretation of the concept was then limited to the principle of equal pay. In 1981, the Commission decided to set up an Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (European Commission, 1981), composed of representatives from all Member States. Article 2.1 of the Commission Decision setting up the Advisory Committee reads that the Committee's remit is "to advise the Commission on the formulation and implementation of its policy to promote women's employment and equal treatment and ensure the continuous exchange of information on experience gained and measures undertaken in the Community in the fields in question." To date, this Advisory Committee is still active and regularly issues opinions in matters relating to gender equality. From 2001 till 2008, thirty opinions on gender-related matters were issued, in 2008 for example on 'new forms of leave' and on the future of the EU budget, giving important directions for the Commission's work.

Following the Beijing Conference, in 1996, the European Commission issued a Communication, also known as the mainstreaming communication, on 'Incorporating equal opportunities for women and men into all Community policies and activities' (European Commission, 1996) in which it set out its approach towards gender mainstreaming. In this Communication, the Commission defined gender mainstreaming policy as *"not restricting efforts to promote equality to the implementation of specific measures to help women, but mobilising all general policies and measures specifically for the purpose of achieving equality"*.

Also in 1996, an Inter-service Group on Gender Equality was established bringing together representatives of all Commission services to develop gender mainstreaming activities, contribute to and co-ordinate activities in the annual work programmes on Gender Equality, monitor their implementation and exchange experience and good practice.

A next important step was made with the Treaty of Amsterdam, signed in 1997, in which equality between women and men was enshrined as one of the European Union's objectives. Member States committed themselves herewith to eliminate inequalities and to promote gender equality throughout the European Community in accordance with Articles 2 and 3 of the EC Treaty (gender mainstreaming) as well as Article 141 (equality between women and men in matters of employment and occupation) and Article 13 (sex discrimination within and outside the work place).

The European Commission's commitment to gender equality was reconfirmed in the Community Framework Strategy on Gender Equality (2001-2005) (European Commission, 2000c), which set out a strategy towards attaining the goal of gender equality for all Community activities, including the fields of science, research, technology and development. In this Framework Strategy, the Commission also announced its intention to invite senior officials from the Member States with responsibility for gender mainstreaming to regular high level meetings, thus establishing another support organ, the High Level Group on Gender Mainstreaming. This followed the wish expressed by the Ministers for gender equality during their informal meetings in Paris (2000) and Norrköping (2001) where the need for further strategies and institutional arrangements to strengthen mechanisms for co-ordination, monitoring and follow-up of gender mainstreaming was raised.

The follow-up to the Framework Strategy was put forward in the Commission's Roadmap for Equality between Women and Men 2006-2010 (European Commission, 2006b). It reaffirms the dual approach of gender equality based on gender mainstreaming (the promotion of gender equality in all policy areas and activities) and specific measures. Furthermore, it foresees the improvement of the governance of gender equality: by the reinforcement of structures working towards gender equality, by the reinforcement of networking and support for social dialogue, by supporting gender impact assessment and gender budgeting, as well as by strengthening the

effectiveness of legislation. Last but not least, it commits to accountability and to undertaking progress monitoring and evaluation.

The European Commission thus distinguishes various strands in its approach to realising gender equality. It also attributes the progress it claims to have made to this multiple track approach, as on its gender equality website the Commission states: “the EU has made significant progress over the last decades in achieving equality between women and men. This is mainly thanks to equal treatment legislation, gender mainstreaming and specific measures for the advancement of women.”⁶

As regards legislation, the principle of equal treatment has over the years been implemented in a number of fields by EU legislation and developed in case law by the European Court of Justice. The role of the European Commission herein is to monitor the application of this legislation and, where appropriate, to propose new legislation. Gender Equality Action Programmes (which have been running from 1982 till 2005) have been vehicles for financial support for initiatives aimed at the realisation of specific objectives, inter alia geared towards developing the capabilities of those in the field such as local authorities, independent specialist bodies and the social partners, for example via projects dealing with exchanges of information, dissemination of good practice and the creation of networks.

1.4. Gender mainstreaming in European research by the European Commission

As mentioned above, the Commission’s important communication “Incorporating equal opportunities for women and men into all Community policies and activities” on mainstreaming was published in 1996 (European Commission, 1996), at the time when FP4 was running (1994–1998). When launching the Fifth Framework Programme for research and development (which ran from 1998 till 2002), the Commission adopted the gender mainstreaming approach, in line with the announcement made in its progress report on the follow-up of the Communication (European Commission, 1998a).

Already in April 1998, the conference on “Women and Science” was organised in Brussels (European Commission, 1998b). At this conference, six women scientists gave an account of the difficulties they experienced as a woman in science and portrayed a world of science in which profound changes were needed in thinking and behaviour, both from men and women, so that women can feel at home in scientific research (Dewandre, 2002).

Consequently, the Communication on “Women and Science: mobilising women to enrich European research” (European Commission, 1999) was adopted on 17 February 1999. It set out the concrete measures planned by the Commission to take the gender dimension into account in EU research policy. Nicole Dewandre, who in January 2001 was appointed Head of Unit of the newly created ‘Women and Science’ Unit in the Commission’s DG Research, explained that

⁶ <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=418&langId=en> (accessed on 2 March 2010)

this action plan was conceived to provide a platform for all stakeholders, including women scientists, policy-makers, and scientific institutions. “It aimed to be inclusive in its approach, in order to reflect the wide diversity of approaches within the European Union. This is also why the term “science” is understood in its widest sense, ranging from natural to social science, including—but not restricted to—Science, Engineering, and Technology (SET)” (Dewandre, 2002).

In this Communication, the Commission recognised a threefold relationship between women and research: the first aspect concerns women’s underrepresentation in research and the need to encourage women’s participation in research (research ‘by’ women), the second aspect concerns the gender dimension of the research agenda and the need for research to address women’s needs as well as men’s (research ‘for’ women), and the third aspect finally calls for gender-specific research so that research contributes to an enhanced understanding of gender issues and the functioning of gender in society (research ‘on’ women). Still, it is worth noticing that the notion of ‘gender equality’ was not used in this important Communication. Rather, the concept of ‘equal opportunities for men and women in the field of scientific research’ was used throughout, suggesting an emphasis on the problem of women’s underrepresentation in this field.

The Communication also defined two main objectives:

- To stimulate discussion and the sharing of experience regarding the underrepresentation of women in research among the Member States, to allow action to be taken as effectively as possible at all levels.
- To develop a coherent approach towards the promotion of women in research funded by the European Union, introducing the Gender Watch System as a tool for ensuring that gender issues are taken into account wherever relevant.

I will now briefly describe how these objectives were addressed as from 1999.

First objective: tackling the underrepresentation of women in science

Several EU-level initiatives addressed the first objective. A network of national civil servants, the so-called Helsinki Group, was established in 1998 and met for the first time in November 1999 in Helsinki (hence its name) to facilitate dialogue among the Commission and the Member States and countries associated to the framework programmes on research policy and the development of gender indicators in research. The Helsinki Group is still active, and meets twice a year. It forms an important platform for dialogue on women and science issues, serving as a sort of watchdog and keeping pressure on the Commission to maintain efforts towards gender equality in research.

Also the European Technology Assessment Network (ETAN) that had been set up in the Fourth European Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (1994-1998) of the European Commission was mobilised. The purpose of ETAN was to

promote communication and debate at the European level between policy researchers and policy makers on important science and technology (S&T) policy issues. Among the nine important policy issues that ETAN addressed was ‘the gender balance in research policy’. In this context, an expert group of women scientists was set up. Their report, entitled ‘Science policies in the European Union: promoting excellence through mainstreaming gender equality’ (European Commission, 2000b), concluded that the underrepresentation of women threatens the European goal of achieving scientific excellence and pointed out the gendered nature of the organisation and financing of science in the European Union. The report was however criticised for focussing mainly on female scientists in Western Europe. In a next effort, the Commission supported links between networks of female scientists in various fields to encourage discussions of their specific concerns. Among these, the ENWISE (ENlarge Women In Science to East) expert group was set up in 2002 and ran until December 2003 to examine the situation of women scientists in ten Central and Eastern European countries; but also the initiative ‘Women in Industrial Research’ (WIR) in 2001, followed up by the working group “Women in Science and Technology (WiST)”.

On 3 and 4 April 2000, another conference was organised in Brussels: ‘Women and Science: Making Change Happen’ (European Commission, 2000d), with the aim to hold a wide debate among scientists and decision makers on the basis of the ETAN report about the challenges of the under-representation of women in scientific research, and the means and measures needed to tackle the problem at different levels of implementation of research policies in Europe.

Within the DG Research, a working group on ‘women and science’ was set up bringing together the various Commission services in charge of the research programme, and met for the first time in June 2000.

In March 2001, there was the first meeting of the Sub-Group of Statistical Correspondents of the Helsinki Group, which would support the work of the Helsinki Group members for the collection of (statistical, sex disaggregated) data.

The work done by the different expert groups, the Helsinki Group and its statistical correspondents formed the basis for the further planning of the gender mainstreaming approach, providing for informed decision-making based on proper data.

Second objective: the Gender Watch System

The Communication from 1999 announced the Gender Watch System as a tool for improving the integration of the gender dimension within FP5 (1998-2002) and research policy in general. It consisted of aiming at 40% representation of women in panels and advisory groups, collecting sex-disaggregated data, encouraging gender research within FP5 and conducting gender impact assessment studies on FP5 (European Commission, 2001b). These were to cover the specific programmes in a synchronised manner to critically assess the way gender questions had been treated throughout FP5. The overall aim of the studies was to develop the measures to be taken further in the next Framework Programme (FP6, which ran from 2002 till 2006).

The findings of the gender impact assessment studies on FP5 were presented in a conference “Gender & Research” which took place in Brussels on 8-9 November 2001 (European Commission, 2001a).

Building on the results of the gender impact assessment studies, the Sixth Framework Programme (FP6), which ran from 2002 till 2006, strove to promote gender equality in scientific research, both from the point of view of the participation of women scientists and from the point of view of the integration of the gender dimension in the research agenda.

The Decision establishing FP6 (European Parliament & European Council, 2002) states: ‘The principle of sustainable development, socio-economic, ethical and wider cultural aspects of the envisaged activities, and gender equality, will be duly taken into account, where relevant for the activity concerned.’ And: ‘Efforts aimed at achieving equal gender representation in the actions envisaged will be ensured.’

FP6 still emphasised the threefold goal of promoting research by, for and on women. Under FP6, for the first time, two gender-specific research calls for proposals were launched under the Science and Society activity area (‘Woman and Science 2004’, and ‘Women and Science 2005’) as well as a call for the setting up of a European Platform of Women Scientists (in September 2003). This Platform, intended to connect the existing ‘women in science’ networks and to channel their opinions and concerns to the EU-policy making level, was established in February 2005 as an EU-funded project for a duration of 39 months - with FP6 ‘seed money’ of 2 million euro for its launch, but with the aim to become self-sustainable. Under FP7 it obtained additional money to support its functioning. At the end of 2008, it represented over 12.000 women scientists through its members.

The 2003 work programme of the specific programme “Structuring the European Research Area”, in its “Science and Society” component, included the objective of monitoring gender equality in FP6. Six gender monitoring studies were commissioned, each covering several activity areas, designed to monitor progress towards gender equality and gender relevance awareness in FP6. As with the gender impact assessments from FP5, the findings from these studies were also to be fed into the preparatory work for the next Framework Programme (FP7). By early 2009, results from all these studies were still not available, but from three studies the reports had been published. These studies show that significant progress has been made towards gender equality under FP6 compared to FP5, although also shortcomings are acknowledged, both in the conception and in the implementation of the Framework Programme’s gender equality provisions.

In 2005, the European Commission published a report (European Commission, 2005d), at the request of the Research Council of June 2001 (European Council, 2001), giving an overview of the actions implemented at the European level since the Council Resolution on Science and Society and on Women in Science. It recognised that “*although some progress had been achieved,*

the situation was still far from satisfactory.” In view of the preparation of FP7, it identified five main challenges to be addressed: 1) empowering women in decision-making positions in research and technology; 2) reconciling professional and private life (for researchers); 3) gender and scientific excellence; 4) strengthening gender research; 5) increasing the participation of women in science, technology and innovation.

The Decision on the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7) states that “*The integration of the gender dimension and gender equality will be addressed in all areas of research.*” It also states that the following activities will be financed: “*Gender research, including the integration of the gender dimension in all areas of research and the promotion of the role of women in research and in scientific decision-making bodies.*” (European Parliament and Council of the European Union, 2006)

The two concepts ‘equal participation’ and ‘the gender dimension of the research’ are in FP7 still put forward as integral parts of the European Commission’s strategy towards gender equality in research. There is thus continuity in the objectives that are expressed.

A note has to be made about how the European Commission addresses the wider anti-discrimination vision in the research policy domain. Since 2000, the EU has started to put in place wider anti-discrimination legislation,⁷ aiming at the elimination of inequality on grounds of racial or ethnic origin, religion and belief, disability, sexual orientation, or age. Nevertheless, at a time when the EU embraces diversity and requires its Member States to promote equality and to fight discrimination on all these grounds, such considerations have not yet found their way into the EU research policy in which the equality focus is still on women.

1.5. Analytical framework and structure of the book

The case study analysis will require material that allows to consider both the planning stage and the actual implementation stage, while paying attention to both dimensions of the gender equality goal. Such detailed analysis of the gender mainstreaming implementation can broadly be structured according to the following three main subjects:

1. In relation to the planning stage, the provisions and structures put in place to allow for the implementation of gender mainstreaming in the Framework Programme;
2. In relation to the performance in terms of the quantitative dimension of the gender equality goal as it was conceptualised by the DG RTD: the participation of women in the Framework Programme;
3. In relation to the performance in terms of the second dimension of the gender equality goal: the integration of gender considerations in the research projects.

⁷ Directives that have been enacted in the area of anti-discrimination are the Racial Equality Directive, 2000/43/EC, and the Employment Equality Directive, 2000/78/EC. Council Directive 2000/43/EC implements the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin, and Council Directive 2000/78/EC establishes a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation.

Finally, the case study will have to allow detecting how institutional features - which comprise *inter alia* (elements of) the organisational formal and informal culture, hierarchical structures, management principles – may have interfered with the implementation of gender mainstreaming. For this part of the analysis, the literature review will clarify which aspects (or manifestations) need to be paid particular attention to.

The research work undertaken by the author for the European Commission under the contract 3-RTD-C4, regarding ‘Monitoring progress towards gender equality in the Sixth RTD Framework Programme’ (Lot III) offers the above data. The results of this research have been published by the European Commission (Mergaert, 2008) and are also available online.⁸ This research examined the implementation of gender mainstreaming in two specific parts of the Sixth Framework Programme: the ‘Social Sciences and Humanities’ research part and the ‘Science and Society’ research area. The former field was called ‘Citizens and governance in a knowledge-based society’ in FP6. ‘Science and Society’ covered the areas related to science and governance; scientific advice and reference systems; ethics; uncertainty, risk and the precautionary principle; science communication; awards; science education; women and science.

The research has been primarily based on desk analysis of relevant data, reports and documents concerning FP6 in general and the research areas relevant for this particular research. This included the work programmes, guides for proposers and evaluators, the call texts, all evaluation reports and independent observer reports, evaluation summary reports, project proposals and technical annexes to the contracts of financed projects, activity and other project reports.

Throughout the study, there have been regular contacts, meetings and exchanges with the Commission’s liaison persons for the different ‘parts’ of the study who provided the required data. Moreover, the gender monitoring study has not been the only assignment performed by the author for the DG Research (and its predecessor, the so-called DG XII). Other assignments, before, during and after the gender monitoring study were and are being performed.⁹ All this work and the frequent contacts and meetings with DG RTD staff and other experts working with the EC have allowed an on-going process of participatory observation which yielded important insights that feed into the present work.

Both theoretically and methodologically, this work takes a multidisciplinary approach drawing from gender theory, feminist institutionalist theory, organisational theory, public

⁸ http://ec.europa.eu/research/science-society/document_library/pdf_06/monitoring-progress-towards-gender-equality-in-fp6_en.pdf (last accessed on 6 August 2010)

⁹ Examples of studies in which the author participated as core team member include a study on SME participation in the 4th European Union R&TD Framework Programme (1987-1988); an analysis of the constituent elements of the ‘European Added Value’ of the EU RTD programmes (1999-2000); a cost-benefit analysis and risk assessment for the possible externalization of operational management tasks related to horizontal research activities involving SMEs (2004); a qualitative study to understand the image of science among the general population (2008). The author acted at various occasions as independent expert for the evaluation of proposals submitted under the Sixth and Seventh Framework Programme for RTD. The author has also been the project leader of the project ‘gender toolkit and training activities’ for the DG RTD in which a gender toolkit and training package were developed and 33 one-day gender training sessions took place.

administration theory, political science, as well as feminist development theory. Interpretations and analyses are solidly founded on a substantial set of empirical data. The combination of qualitative and quantitative methods for the analysis of this data provides further ground for the interpretations and arguments that are formulated. As such, this dissertation aims to describe, understand and explain the reality of gender mainstreaming implementation by the European Commission in the research policy domain.

As to the organisation of this book, the present introductory chapter is followed by Chapter 2, which lays down the theoretical foundations of this research. As I argue that it is worth to perform the analysis of gender mainstreaming with an 'institutional lens', this chapter first brings together the existing knowledge about the institutional features of the European Commission. It continues by taking a close look at the explanations currently put forward by gender theorists when discussing variable outcomes of gender mainstreaming. Three main issues are considered: conceptual fuzziness and ambiguity, prerequisites and conditions for effective gender mainstreaming, and resistance.

Chapters 3 to 7 are the empirical chapters. Chapter 3 analyses the provisions and methods that were structurally foreseen to implement gender mainstreaming in the Sixth Framework Programme. Chapter 4 looks into women's participation in FP6, both at the framework programme level and at the level of projects. Chapter 5 deals with the extent to which the research projects funded under FP6 themselves were gender sensitive. As a new specific instrument for mainstreaming gender in the research itself was introduced by the European Commission for FP6, a separate chapter, Chapter 6, is dedicated to the analysis of the implementation of this instrument and its effects. Chapter 7, finally, sketches the processes, actors and proceedings 'backstage' in the European Commission's Directorate-General for Research, responsible for the implementation of the framework programmes.

Chapter 8 addresses the theoretical issues through the empirical lens of the case. It sets out what exactly has been the character of the implementation of gender mainstreaming in the period and case studied and discusses how the theory explains, or fails to explain, the variability and unevenness in the gender mainstreaming implementation and its outcomes.

2. Theoretical framework to analyse gender mainstreaming by the European Commission

As said above, I argue that it is useful and important to include the consideration of the institutional context in the analysis of gender mainstreaming implementation and to verify which institutional aspects interfere with it, positively or negatively. Indeed, I believe this ‘institutional lens’ will make visible the mechanisms that are at work and that affect the implementation of gender mainstreaming. At the same time, however, I do not deny the important role of actors (or agency), which is another dimension that will be taken on board.

I will in the present chapter construct the theoretical framework against which I will perform my analysis. I depart from a review of academic literature from different scholarly fields on the institutional features of the European Commission in order to establish how it can be characterised. Next, I will present existing theoretical explanations developed by feminist scholars for variable gender mainstreaming implementation and outcomes. Such explanations address the fuzziness and ambiguity of the concepts of gender equality and gender mainstreaming, key conditions or prerequisites for gender mainstreaming not being fulfilled, and resistance to gender change. These will be discussed in separate sections, in each of which I will analyse what can be withheld as promising propositions in the light of an institutional analytical frame. The final section of the present chapter summarises the theoretical framework upon which I build my case analysis.

2.1. Approach to developing a theoretical framework

Before proceeding with the characterisation of the European Commission, I will first introduce the dependent variables that will be used for this research. These are ‘variability’, ‘unevenness’ and ‘(in-)effectiveness’. These concepts are helpful qualifiers for the study of gender mainstreaming implementation. For the sake of clarity, I present below the underlying definitions and meanings I attribute to these terms.

‘Effectiveness’ is a term that is commonly used in evaluative practice. With effectiveness is meant: the extent to which intended objectives (or targets) are met. ‘Effectiveness evaluation’ is then: measuring the extent to which targets are met, and detecting the factors that hinder or facilitate their realisation.¹⁰ As such, it links the (implementation) processes with their outcomes. The website of the European Commission states on the ‘EVALSED - The resource for the evaluation of socio-economic development’ glossary: *‘The most common definition*

¹⁰ Source: <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/effectiveness-evaluation.html>

identifies effectiveness with “achievement of objectives”. This leaves open the definition to the different meanings of “objectives”. Objectives can be expressed quantitatively in terms of expected output or results. The effectiveness is evaluated simply by comparing what has been obtained with what had been planned: outputs and results indicators are all is needed. Another definition of effectiveness tends to equate it with the notion of quality: effectiveness is evaluated by comparing results with quality standards.”¹¹

Thus, when assessing effectiveness of a policy, it is the outcomes of the implementation process that are considered. It is important to keep this in mind because the notion of effectiveness relates then two stages: the policy implementation stage - in which the planning stage when objectives are (supposed to be) set can again be distinguished from the actual implementation process - and what comes out of it.

I use the word ‘variability’ when differences are observed or identified. The observation of ‘variability’ does in itself not hold a judgement or quality assessment. ‘Unevenness’, on the other hand, also points to differences or variability, but does imply a quality assessment. For example, as the European Commission adopted gender mainstreaming as a strategy, all Directorates-General (DG) are supposed to take up gender mainstreaming. Consequently, when it is observed that not all DGs duly do so (Pollack and Hafner-Burton 2000), one can say there is ‘unevenness’ in uptake by the actors.

Zooming in on the case that I will analyse, existing reports published by the European Commission reveal that even *within* the research policy domain variability is recognised in uptake of gender mainstreaming between research fields (scientific disciplines) and between actors, explaining - at least partly - unevenness of outcomes. Also differences in results where the goals of gender mainstreaming in this field are concerned (women’s participation and equal opportunities on the one hand; and gender-sensitive research on the other hand) have been identified, with better results being noted for women’s participation than for the gender dimension in the research work itself (European Commission, 2001b, 2009). These observations make it worthwhile to explore how exactly differences have manifested themselves and to which of the gender equality policy objectives (as set out above) they relate.

For the purpose of this exercise and as already indicated above, I want to distinguish two particular stages in the policy implementation cycle namely the policy implementation planning stage and the actual implementation stage: during the planning stage, the general framework, structures and provisions are defined and developed and the overall attribution of resources decided upon; while in the actual implementation stage, the provisions and measures are implemented and use is made of the tools that were set in place.

¹¹ http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/evaluation/evalsed/glossary/glossary_e_en.htm#Effectiveness

2.2 Existing fragments of institutional knowledge: characterising the European Commission

In feminist theory, there is a relatively young strand of research that focuses on the interplay between gender theory and institutionalist theory.¹² The scholars adhering to the feminist institutionalist school of thinking explore the interplay between feminist approaches to gendered institutions and new institutional theory. They call for attention for the important link between the institutional features and the potential and outcomes of the gender equality undertakings of these institutions (Kenny, 2007; Kenny & Mackay, 2009; Mackay & Meier, 2003; Mackay, Monro, & Waylen, 2009). As Mackay and Meier state: *“Understanding political and social institutions as gendered is central to understanding the practices, ideas, goals and outcomes of politics; the dynamics of change (and continuity); and also reveals the ways in which institutions reflect, reinforce and structure unequal gendered power relations”* (2003:2). The feminist institutionalist research *“adopts a wide definition of ‘institutions’ to include the formal features of political systems and also the more informal practices and norms that structure political life as if they were formal rules, promoting or foreclosing certain interpretations of particular problems or situations”* (Feminism & Institutionalism International Network).

To make the analysis of the case in the present research, it is therefore relevant to explore whether, how and to what extent the institutional features of the European Commission may affect its performance in terms of policy implementation – and more specifically gender mainstreaming in the domain of research. In doing so, I will however also pay particular attention to ‘agency’, or the role played by specific actors in the process.

The link between the chances that gender mainstreaming initiatives taken on by an organisation are effective and the organisational character has been suggested by various authors, often in feminist development theory, although from slightly different angles (Charlesworth 2005; Mazey 2000; Rao and Kelleher 2005; Derbyshire 2002). Rao and Kelleher (2005:64) define the ‘deep structure’ of the organisation as ‘the collection of taken-for-granted values, and ways of thinking and working that underlie decision-making and action.’ Thus, for understanding the successes or failures of gender mainstreaming implementation by means of an analysis ‘with an institutional lens’, it is useful to consider this ‘deep structure’, since it can be expected that notably ‘decision-making and action’ regarding gender mainstreaming – a policy strategy that is strongly value-driven - will be determined by it. More specifically, in this work I will pay attention to any signals that can be picked up of favourable or unfavourable attitudes, openness or closedness for gender change.

Let us take a look at what scholarly literature about the European Commission has to offer which may be useful for this work. As an institution, the European Commission (EC) has specific features (Szarek & Peterson, 2007), and it has attracted the attention of scholars

¹² The Feminism & Institutionalism International Network (fiin) was launched in 2007. Website: <http://www.femfiin.com/about-us>

precisely for this reason (Georgakakis & de Lassalle, 2004; Hooghe, 2001; Hooghe & Marks, 2002). Nevertheless, some of the authors who claim to be ‘experts’ on the EU in general, and the European Commission in particular, do not grasp the particularities of its functioning and this is largely due to the fact they base their views on documentary work only. The most precise analyses and observations about the European Commission have been made by those authors who had the privilege of working over a longer time span with or within the institution, and thus have been able to build up insider knowledge and have gained insights that remain hidden from those who only have access to documents (Braithwaite, 2000; Stratigaki, 2005). This is so precisely because there are external, visible aspects as well as internal factors that characterise an organisation, as pointed out by Díaz González (2001).

Specifically relating to the European Commission (EC), and the barriers within this organisation against a successful implementation of gender mainstreaming, Braithwaite (2000) points to a general weakness of the Commission on policy implementation, arguing that *“the European Commission is stronger on policy formulation than on developing accompanying arguments, procedures and instruments for translating policy into practice within the framework of programmes and projects”*, an argument that is confirmed by others (Hafner-Burton & Pollack, 2008; Peters, 1996; Stratigaki, 2005). Adding to this argument, Braithwaite (2000) attributes to EC staff a general weakness on specialist knowledge. She points out a number of revealing aspects regarding the capacity of actors in the European Commission: *“there is a major lack of knowledge on gender issues within the European Commission at all levels. Thematic training is rare, management information systems are poorly developed and the personnel policies do not support the development of specialist knowledge and know-how amongst civil servants. Civil servants are generalists, equipped to move from one Directorate General (DG) to another without investment in retraining.”* The technical, human and financial resources that have been allocated to support gender mainstreaming in the Structural Funds, evaluated by Braithwaite, have been very limited and while major efforts were mobilised to influence the Member States and EU regions, far less was done to bring about change in mentalities and understanding within the Commission itself.

Braithwaite (2000) points out some particularly important barriers within the European Commission services that impede the effective implementation of gender mainstreaming. She notably argues that internal politics in the Commission, middle management reluctance and rivalry between services about power, play an important role, which makes progress dependent on certain people in the right positions at the right moment. She suggests that *“progress can be made and actions taken, but then the key person moves on, the momentum and institutional memory are lost, and the initiative fades away”*, and that this is valid for the Commission as a whole. Gender mainstreaming is insufficiently rooted in the organisation. As a result, staff changes can have a major effect on sustained support for mainstreaming, especially when the organisation fails to identify who will be the next person to take responsibility.

This suggests that there is not only an absence of support for the implementation of gender

mainstreaming in the European Commission, but that the institutional structure and internal organisation have an incapacitating effect on the actors who are supposed to deal with the implementation at the various stages of the process.

Pollack and Hafner-Burton (2000) regard the practice of 'framing gender mainstreaming as an efficient means for achieving other policy goals' as sophisticated and strategic efforts on the part of gender advocates inside the institution (in this case the European Commission). In doing so, these advocates succeed in entering gender equality considerations into policy fields and institutional departments where gender considerations had been absent before. These authors, drawing from social movement theory, point out the key role of (individual) agency and the ability of these strategic actors to overcome structural obstacles through a skilful process of what they call 'strategic framing'. Pollack and Hafner-Burton argue that the effects of gender mainstreaming implementation can be explained in terms of three factors: the political opportunities that arise in different issue areas (or 'policy domains'), the mobilising structures (or networks established among gender equality advocates) and the efforts of such advocates to strategically frame the gender mainstreaming mandate so that it fits the agendas of EU policy-makers. In their analysis, these authors note the need to disaggregate the Commission into its constituent DGs and Services, as *"these units differ considerably in the political opportunities they offer to women's advocates, the networks that mobilise to take advantage of those opportunities, and the dominant frames that characterise and define their respective missions"* (2000:439). They suggest that the implementation of gender mainstreaming is most promising where the opportunity structure is most open, the networks most developed and where the policy frame of mainstreaming resonates with the organisational culture of individual DGs.

In more recent work (Hafner-Burton & Pollack, 2008, 2009), the same authors return to their analysis of the implementation of gender mainstreaming by the European Commission and conclude that the commitment has not led to consistent and effective implementation. They argue that the failure is due to lacking sufficiently hard incentives for mobilising sufficient interest among crucial actors within the bureaucracy. They thus suggest that the limited impact of gender mainstreaming by the European Commission does not reflect flaws inherent to the concept of gender mainstreaming, but rather the Commission's choice to rely on (too) soft incentives for its implementation. These authors plead for 'hard incentives' as a necessary condition for behavioural change by a wide range of actors within international organisations. As a particular obstacle in the European Commission, they argue that internalisation of values, ideas and norms - or socialisation - is hindered by the fact that *"gender mainstreaming and other cross-cutting or transversal issues often take the form of occasional (and typically voluntary) training sessions or periodic cross-departmental meetings whose central message may cut against the organisational mission and the views of colleagues within a given official's home DG"* (2009:6). These authors suggest as possible hard incentives public reporting (as a 'naming and shaming' practice), or the monitoring and sanctioning of officials that fail to deliver.

At the same time, these authors draw the attention to the fact that DGs that took on gender issues most often did so at the initiative of a high-level official within the DG, and not because of pressure from above. Although their aim with the paper is to stress the necessity of hard incentives, these authors thus point to the importance of individual, voluntary agency within the Commission as explanation for the highly variable pattern of policy outputs. In the absence of hard incentives, there is no 'automatic' implementation of the policy but action is dependent on individual actors.

Stratigaki, who has worked in the Equal Opportunities Unit of the European Commission's Directorate General for Employment and Social Affairs from 1991 till 1999 and thus has precise insights in how gender mainstreaming was politically handled in that period, gives an enlightening account of these proceedings (Stratigaki, 2005). She points out the unique environment of European policy-making in an "*institutional context of the powerful and deeply hierarchical European Commission where top-level administration and technocratic staff can play a decisive role*" (2005:166). She shows with clear examples that the adoption of gender mainstreaming in the European Commission was deliberately used as an alibi to weaken, and even to eliminate, efforts towards advancing gender equality by shuffling aside the Equal Opportunities Unit and by withdrawing resources previously dedicated to positive action. She thus claims a purposeful and conscious manoeuvre of resistance masked by an apparent commitment to gender mainstreaming. At the same time, Stratigaki attributes positive results to the personal commitment of a number of individuals – mostly women – elsewhere in the organisation (other Directorates General, in charge of other policy domains), who opened windows of opportunity for positive action for women, although "*the transformative effect was lost with the departure of the women politicians and technocrats who had initiated and supported these policies*" (2005:179). Negative effects can be ascribed to a certain (female) ambitious Director who rather obeyed her hierarchy than to assume the gender equality objectives that fell within her remit. Stratigaki concludes by confirming the Council of Europe's Group of Specialists' point that specific gender equality policies (legislation, mechanisms, specific actions to address women's interests, research and training) are a prerequisite for successful implementation of gender mainstreaming (Council of Europe, 1998:21). Stratigaki believes moreover that parallel positive action will increase women's visibility and will help to avoid that gender equality is "*diluted in other policy objectives or hijacked by other policy priorities*" (2005:169). She supports the European Parliament's Committee on Women's Rights (European Parliament, 1997) in its argument in favour of "*an approach combining gender mainstreaming and positive actions, the definition of assessment criteria, the identification of obstacles created by culture and rigid societal structures, the development of gender-sensitive indicators, the importance of coordination structures and budget lines within the Commission and the introduction of a gendered perspective to legislation*" (2005: 175-176).

A recent report from the European Women's Lobby on the gender equality efforts of the European

Union (European Women's Lobby, 2010) confirms the above observations on the gender mainstreaming undertakings by the EC. It points more specifically to a technocratic vision-less approach to gender mainstreaming, which suggests the EC takes the position that if the process is in place, the outputs do not matter that much. Also the critical importance of individual agency and of sufficient resources is underlined by the EWL. The EWL report states literally: *"gender mainstreaming's goal of securing equality between women and men is at times eclipsed by an exclusive focus on the tools of mainstreaming. This very often results in a technocratic, 'tick box' approach to pursuing gender equality which excuses inequality between women and men if there is evidence of some mainstreaming tool having been employed. The implementation of gender mainstreaming continues to be heavily dependent upon the political will of committed individuals and is therefore lost with their departure. [...] To substantiate the EU's commitment to equality between women and men it is vital to dedicate significant financial and human resources to mainstreaming gender. This, however, has yet to take place."* (2010:16-17)

Some other authors have contributed interesting elements about the European Commission. Hooghe (Hooghe, 1999, 2001, 2005; Hooghe & Marks, 2002) studied how top officials in the European Commission form their preferences. She points out that while top officials have diverse cultural and educational backgrounds and very different professional experiences, the Commission's way of working hinders socialisation of a shared set of values and thus permits them to remain heterogeneous. Hooghe describes the Commission as *"a compartmentalised bureaucracy, where many directorates-general resemble self-governing statelets. This makes it possible for top officials – the bosses of these statelets – to mould the norms and habits of their own small world to their own image, and thus to persevere in being different"* (2001:23). Moreover, the strong predominance of men in the top of the hierarchy, as Georgakakis and de Lasalle (2004) show, renders the organisation very male-biased: 191 persons have occupied the 251 posts of Director General or Deputy Director General in the period 1958 till 2002. Only 2.5% of the Director General and 2% of the Deputy Director General positions have been occupied by women in that period, sketching a caricatured picture of an organisation which has actively been promoting equal opportunities and gender equality since the nineties.

Stevens (2009) points to the relevance to subject not only elected bodies, but also bureaucracies to representation questions. Taking the European Commission as a case study, she draws parallels between elected bodies and bureaucracies; symbolic or descriptive representation versus substantive representation in the former; passive versus active representation in the latter. She furthermore draws the attention to the paradoxical situation in the European Commission, where representation rules are applied where nationality is concerned, but not as regards representation of the sexes.¹³

¹³ 'Representation of geographical balance is acknowledged at the junior level by the holding of competitions confined to nationals of specific member states, particularly in the context of enlargement, where nationals of the new member states are by definition not yet present in the administration, and at the most senior levels by the designation of specific posts for persons of particular nationalities.' (Stevens, 2009:130)

She argues that the classic Weberian model of the bureaucracy where bureaucrats have no opinion, but fulfil their role of policy preparation and implementation, does not match the reality. She confirms Longwe's argument (Longwe, 1997) that when bureaucracies fall short of implementing policies they do intervene in the policy-making process – thus contradicting their mandate. Amongst bureaucrats, there is usually a sense that it is the bureaucracy's role to sustain and advance a 'general interest', a common good. In addition, however, there are officials who let their actions be guided by a pronounced, personal, orientation.

This discretionary power on behalf of civil servants in the organisation is confirmed by Suvarierol (2007) who points out that the division of power between the political level, represented by the College of Commissioners, and the bureaucratic level of the Commission that is responsible for preparing, managing and implementing the decisions of the College, is not as clear-cut and simple as it seems. To sustain this argument Suvarierol refers to the heated debate that followed Commissioner Günter Verheugen's complaint of the power of Commission bureaucrats by saying that "*The Commissioners have to take extreme care that important questions are decided in their weekly meeting and not decided by the civil servants among themselves.*" To this, Commissioner Danuta Hübner added that Commissioners must be careful not to lose grip of things with the influence of the Commission's civil servants on the rise¹⁴ (2007:14).

Within an organisation that is intrinsically patriarchal and gendered as masculine, and within which power relations privilege men, this situation is problematic for advancing gender equality. The European Commission, reporting on a survey among its female staff, writes (p.63): '*Women at all levels are very negative about their chances of rising rapidly to higher ranks in the Commission's hierarchy and they "believe" it is because of cultural resistance on the Commission's part to female managers*' (European Commission, 2007). Suggesting that critical mass does matter, Stevens concludes that not only is it possible, it is also desirable to regard a bureaucracy like the European Commission as a place where representation can and should occur.

Together, the authors who discussed the European Commission point to a number of characteristics of the organisation that are regarded as having (mainly adverse) effects on the implementation of gender mainstreaming, explaining variable and uneven implementation: a general weakness in policy implementation, a weakness where specialist knowledge is concerned, an absence of hard incentives, an important degree of discretionary power on the part of individual civil servants, a compartmentalised structure where heterogeneous value sets can reign.

These features may have allowed gender mainstreaming to be adopted because different conceptualisations of gender mainstreaming could co-exist and have been tolerated, which

¹⁴ www.euobserver.com, Commission Bureaucrats are Getting too Powerful, says Verheugen, 5 October 2006, and EU Commission Sees Civil Servants' Power Grow, 22 February 2007

opened space to action as Jacquot (2006) argues. However, they also provide ample space for a wide variety of manifestations of resistance against gender mainstreaming and gender equality, as Braithwaite (2000) and Stratigaki (2005) have so clearly shown. In addition, the absence of hard incentives - one of the identified key conditions for effective gender mainstreaming - further undermines the potential of the strategy, and thus its effectiveness. What inevitably happens is an uneven uptake of gender mainstreaming within the institution and a variable pattern of implementation in the various parts of the organisation, as Pollack and Hafner-Burton (Hafner-Burton & Pollack, 2009; Pollack & Hafner-Burton, 2000) could conclude. These result in uneven policy outcomes, and – for outsiders (like external evaluators) - gender mainstreaming not meeting the expectations in terms of its effectiveness.

Let us sum up what we now know about the institutional features of the European Commission. We note that the institution is depicted as marked by strong internal politics, rivalry between services and power struggles; voluntaristic take-up of initiatives, resulting in variable patterns of adoption and implementation of cross-cutting concerns; a high level of internal turnover of staff who change functions frequently,¹⁵ a practice which has major effects on the functioning of the organisation and results in a lack of institutional memory, especially given the fact that management information systems are poorly developed.

Moreover, the organisation is described as very hierarchical and masculine, rewarding 'male' behaviour (like working late in the evenings), with a clear gender imbalance in staffing at middle and top management levels, and workloads that are incompatible with family responsibilities. The first part of the above description of the European Commission matches pretty well the concept of a 'liquid bureaucracy' as introduced by Roggeband and Verloo (2006). The second part of the description makes it a very hierarchical 'liquid bureaucracy', with a male-gendered organisational culture.

At the same time, the analyses suggest that attitudes towards gender equality within the European Commission may vary from one department to the other, which, combined with Hooghe's argument that the top officials determine the norms and values that reign in their local 'pockets of power' or statelets, means that especially the attitudes of top officials determine the attitudes within those local pockets of power. Moreover, the fact that people change positions frequently in the Commission, suggests that the contexts in which gender change has to be implemented within the institution are of a highly dynamic nature, in line with the fluid character of the organisation.

The existing research on the European Commission shows that the organisation-specific features affect its functioning, and provide for windows of opportunity for change that open

¹⁵ Until recently, the European Commission's human resources rules did not allow for civil servants to stay in their functions for longer than five years. This rule was grounded in a concern for safeguarding ethical decision-making and avoiding conflicts of interests. This general rule has been abandoned, but is maintained for staff in 'sensitive positions'. Staff in the European Commission call the practice of having to change functions sneeringly 'to take part in the game of the musical chair' (source: informal conversation with a civil servant).

and close, depending on a combination of factors but to a large extent determined by the reigning local attitude towards gender relations and gender change, and individuals' initiatives. Stratigaki (2005) notably shows that while the conditions for gender change in the nineties had become unfavourable in the DG Employment and Social Affairs, due to the resistance of individuals at the top of the directorate-general, other DGs among which the DG Research took up gender mainstreaming in the same period with significant effects following – again – individuals' efforts.

Also Hafner-Burton and Pollack have made clear that while the right framing and the existence of elite allies may allow for achievements, the specific organisational features of the European Commission prevent an adequate and even implementation of gender mainstreaming.

In the present work, I will show the interrelation between these organisational aspects in general and the local attitudes towards gender equality as a policy goal in the DG RTD in particular in the period of Framework Programme 6, and the gender mainstreaming implementation. Insight into this interplay will not only shed light on the reasons for disappointing gender mainstreaming results by showing the causal relations, it will further expose the mechanisms that have been at work.

But let us first turn our attention to some other theoretical propositions of feminist scholars for disappointing effects of gender mainstreaming, and see if they can be used to complement the building blocks provided by previous research that links gender mainstreaming implementation to institutional features. In the sections that follow, we will in turn look into conceptual issues, the fulfilment of key conditions for effective gender mainstreaming, and resistance.

2.3. Fuzziness and ambiguity of concepts: meanings and interpretations in gender theory

One of the explanations that are frequently offered by feminist scholars for disappointing results of gender mainstreaming efforts is the fact that the concepts used to define and to describe the strategy are fuzzy, unclear and cause confusion. Not only appear there to be problems with the notion of gender mainstreaming, also the understanding and meaning of the underlying concepts (as there are: equal rights, equal treatment, equal opportunities, positive action) are object of discussion. Different interpretations exist of the concept of gender equality and different views on the ways to get there. While the concept of gender has been introduced precisely to indicate that masculinity and femininity are social constructs that evolve and vary between cultures, spaces and time, the fact that the meaning of 'gender equality' is therefore not static either seems much less evident and has seldom been taken on board in academic research. However, most theorists discuss (visions of) gender equality as fixed rather than accepting and recognising the dynamics which push forward feminist debates and which inevitably also affect how the notion of gender equality is understood. This static consideration of gender equality has caused complications in the theorisation.

There are extensive, though not necessarily productive, discussions among feminist scholars

about the meanings of and confusion over concepts, and many have engaged in attempts to disentangle this web. Unfortunately, the terminology used in such discussions tends to increase the fuzziness because the same wordings are sometimes used to mean different things, and different wordings to indicate the same thing. Moreover, authors seem sometimes to mix up the goals (or 'visions') of gender equality, and the ways to get there (strategies or approaches) (Walby, 2005).

As mentioned earlier, the Council of Europe's Group of Specialists (Council of Europe, 1998) defined gender mainstreaming as '*the (re)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and at all stages, by the actors normally involved in policy-making*'. This definition highlights the goal of gender equality, the process, the objects and active subjects of mainstreaming. To clarify the notion of 'gender equality', an elaborate conceptualisation of this goal of gender mainstreaming is provided elsewhere in the report. In summary, it emphasises the need to take a broader and more comprehensive view on gender equality, giving value to differences and diversity, and rejecting hierarchical relations between men and women.

The Council of Europe's Group of Specialists in their report also mention the 'misunderstanding of the concept and the way in which it relates to specific gender equality policies' as the first difficulty that can accompany gender mainstreaming. Notably, if not well understood, mainstreaming can be put in place instead of, rather than as complementary to, specific gender equality policy.

Three models of gender equality, each of which tends to rely on specific strategies, are usually distinguished (Rees, 1998, 2005; Squires, 1999, 2005; Walby, 2005; Woodward, 2004). These are based on different perspectives: sameness, difference and transformation. Let us take a closer look at how different authors have reflected on these models and their meanings.

Rees (2001) outlines three *models of equal opportunities* that have dominated policy approaches to gender equality: equal treatment, positive action and mainstreaming, and continues in her paper to call these *three models of gender equality*. Rees thus uses the terms 'equal opportunities' and 'gender equality' interchangeably, suggesting they mean the same to her. Rees argues that equal treatment does not bring equal outcome because it takes the male as norm, which has resulted in the 'sameness versus difference' debate. According to Rees, in this discussion, 'equal treatment' is regarded as an essential human right, whereby the emphasis has been on women being treated *the same as*, rather than *equal to* men. Positive action, then, recognises and responds to the differences between men and women, however taking the view that women's special needs or disadvantages are the 'problem' (Rees, 2005). She concludes that 'the law on equal treatment' (or equal rights) is a vital principle, but not a sufficient measure to ensure equality (Rees, 2001). It is clear that in 'equal treatment', she includes equal rights, but she does not explicitly distinguish between both these terms. Rather, she seems to use them interchangeably, conflating legal principles with their enactment. Positive action measures

again are presented by Rees as insufficient because they are add-ons, restricted in time and resources and not challenging the masculine norm, but rather helping women fit in. It is here that gender mainstreaming enters the picture.

Rees (1998) defines gender mainstreaming as *'the systematic integration of equal opportunities for women and men into the organisation and its culture, into policies, programmes and projects, into ways of seeing and doing'*. Her definition focuses on systems and structures themselves. In Rees' view, it is a long-term strategy that, while it needs the other two approaches to support it, has much more potential to have a serious impact upon gender equality. Rees has thus situated sameness, difference and transformation as intermediate targets in an evolving (learning) process within a wider historical and institutional environment, but at the same time embraces all three approaches that go with these visions as simultaneously necessary and complementary to each other. In a later paper, Rees (2005) agrees with Booth and Bennett (2002) that *'equal treatment legislation and positive action measures can be seen as distinct approaches to gender equality in their own right, but also as tools in the delivery of gender mainstreaming'*.

Booth and Bennett (2002) also distinguish three models, which they label respectively equal treatment, women's perspective and gender perspective. In their view, gender mainstreaming can comprise all three approaches simultaneously - partly as a result of the (dynamic) historical developments of the equality strategies in the different national contexts. They attribute the existing misconception and confused practice of gender mainstreaming to the lack of acknowledgement of the interdependence of the three equality perspectives, all incorporated in the mainstreaming strategy, and to the failure to theorise and articulate this complementarity clearly. In line with the Council of Europe's Group of Specialists (Council of Europe, 1998), they point out that gender mainstreaming, as a strategy to achieve equality, requires a set of measures, methods and specific tools to implement the strategy. Among these measures may be training to make daily actors aware and capable or support mechanisms such as specialist equality structures within the organisation. Such initiatives are recognisable as positive action measures, but are still part and parcel of the overall gender mainstreaming strategy.

Woodward (2004) sees an important confusion in the concepts of equal opportunity, affirmative action, and gender mainstreaming, whereby equal opportunity situates itself more in a human resources context aimed at equal participation of women and men in the workplace. As gender mainstreaming emerged at the EU horizon, it was linked to the EU's employment policy and labour market concerns. This has led to the misconception that gender mainstreaming and equal opportunity refer to the same content, a problem which according to Woodward has been exacerbated by the fact that many women's policy machineries in Europe have found their place in the institutional structure linked to employment issues. She stresses that gender mainstreaming is fundamentally different from equal opportunity, mainly because of its transformative and transversal character. Woodward considers gender mainstreaming

and equal opportunity as complementary approaches. It is to be noted that Woodward does not mention equal treatment, which might suggest a possible conflation by Woodward of the concepts of equal opportunity and equal treatment.

Reflecting on the understandings of gender equality and gender mainstreaming, Walby (2005) questions whether the vision of gender equality can be distinguished from the strategy to get there, as these are often conflated. She points out that the three models, as identified by Rees (1998) contain elements of both vision and strategy. Walby explains the fervent discussions on the sameness-difference distinction by the dilemmas that are posed by recognising difference while avoiding the trap of essentialism. This debate also reflects in the discussions on gender mainstreaming: although its goal is the elimination of gender inequality, the extent to which this can mean accepting and valuing existing gendered differences gives rise to serious disagreements in theory and practice.

While Rees (2005) and Walby (2005) do recognise a three-pronged approach towards gender equality in the EU policy, they do not consider the different approaches as being part of a wider, encompassing gender mainstreaming strategy: while gender mainstreaming has been adopted by the EU as the main approach to realise gender equality, legislative measures continue to be developed, and positive actions remain on the agenda (for example to combat violence against women).

Lombardo, Meier and Verloo (2009c) are authors who recognise the dynamic character of the theoretical concepts: they confirm that while gender equality has become widely accepted as a political goal, its meaning has remained contested and has undergone many changes in the process and across borders, amidst different actors and among a variety of institutions. They therefore describe it as a “travelling concept”, in its journey filled with different meanings. These authors point out that the concept of gender equality has been labelled differently, with distinctive labels sometimes carrying the same meaning, and similar labels sometimes referring to tremendously diverging contents. The meanings of gender inequality and equality *‘are multiple, sometimes rather contradictory than coherent and change over time and place’* (Lombardo, Meier, & Verloo, 2009a). Examples of labels are equal opportunities, women’s empowerment, the promotion or advancement of women, equality, or emancipation. As we have seen, this is illustrated by Rees (2005), who uses equal opportunities and gender equality as interchangeable terms. Lombardo and colleagues issue the warning that labels matter but can be a misleading feature in understanding the content and strategy of gender equality policies.

Daly (2005) provides helpful insights in how the theory on gender equality approaches has limited its own development. Recognising in the contemporary gender policy mix a combination of approaches as well as hybridised approaches, she challenges the classification of approaches in distinctive models. She labels such classification whereby the focus is drawn to the specific

features characterising each set (as for example presented by Rees) as ‘freezing’ the approach. This freezing not only precludes the possibility of further development and change over time, it stands in the way of an open analytic mind and thus of recognising further developments.

In the same paper, Daly criticises Booth and Bennett’s view of gender mainstreaming incorporating the three approaches, which she labels as ‘stretching’ the concept. She finds such conceptual stretching problematic because it provides fertile ground for political expediency. The tendency toward technocratization in the implementation of gender mainstreaming (applying a gender mainstreaming tool and therefore claiming to be doing gender mainstreaming) may thus, according to Daly, be attributed to a lack of clarity in definition and conceptualisation. Daly suggests herewith a first possible mechanism of why fuzziness in concepts leads to bad implementation: when different interpretations of the concept are floating around, one can easily claim to be doing mainstreaming.

She recognises that the three models are not separable but intertwined with and building on one another, as can be observed in the increasingly complex mix of approaches followed across countries. Daly concludes that one cannot and should not study gender mainstreaming in isolation, because it is in all countries predated by and grounded in an existing history and set of equality measures. She considers the context in which gender mainstreaming takes place as an integral part of the picture: “context matters”.

Summarising and translating the above views and suggestions into more concrete and practical terms, it can be argued that ‘proper’ gender mainstreaming departs from a gender analysis of the situation, whereby the existing problems, inequalities and mechanisms that reproduce these are identified, on the basis of which the necessary actions can be planned. These may then include legislative measures if and when deemed necessary, positive action (which in itself may include for example quotas, gender-specific research, gender machinery) and the development and implementation of gender-sensitive tools, instruments and processes, as the situation calls. In this view, gender mainstreaming as a strategy may thus indeed embody the three approaches which have been seen and discussed as separate and distinct by the authors above. At the same time, it should be recognised that legal action and positive actions have been the predecessors of gender mainstreaming.

When tracing the underlying visions of gender equality in gender mainstreaming implementation processes, the concepts developed by Lombardo, Meier and Verloo (2009a) in their discursive politics approach are useful. These authors introduce a set of concepts to study how the meaning of gender equality is shaped and changed in different contexts, and what the effects are of such discursive practices. They suggest that the formulation of the meaning of gender equality in a definition or piece of legislation ‘fixes’ or freezes it for some time. Such fixing might prevent reflexivity and stand in the way of a further dynamic evolvement of the notion of gender equality.

A ‘shrinking’ of the concept of gender equality shapes the latter by reducing or narrowing down

its meaning to something that is confined to a particular policy area or a specific interpretation of an issue. For example, 'gender equality can be shrunk into non-discrimination in a strictly legal sense' (2009:4).

'Stretching' then is the opposite process, and broadens the concept of gender equality by attributing to it *'a larger meaning that expands on its previous understanding in a given context'* (2009:5). Lombardo, Meier and Verloo (2009) find the view of Booth and Bennett on gender mainstreaming a good example of such 'stretching'. Although one can argue that it is not the concept of gender equality that is stretched here, but rather the understanding of what is gender mainstreaming (thus the approach, as Rees sees it, rather than the concept itself), such discussions about what exactly is being 'stretched' (the notion of gender equality or rather the understanding of what is gender mainstreaming) evidently hold the risk of increasing the confusion over concepts and their meanings.

The subordination of the pursuit of gender equality to other policy goals is labelled by Lombardo, Meier and Verloo (2009) as 'bending' gender equality. In the words of the authors: *'bending occurs when the concept of gender equality is adjusted to make it fit some other goal than the achievement of gender equality itself'* (2009:5). Together with other feminist scholars, like Daly (2005), they tend to consider processes of 'bending' as problematic because, in their opinion, this depoliticises the issue of gender equality by removing from it 'the dimension of conflict'. Lombardo, Meier and Verloo see the practice of 'strategic framing,' as described by Pollack and Hafner-Burton (2000), whereby gender equality considerations are inserted in the political agendas by making them 'fit the dominant frame' within policy domains that are less familiar with and little open to gender issues, as a very good example of such bending process.

Lombardo, Meier and Verloo (2009b) conclude that *'if we look at issues over a long time span we might find processes that stretch a bit, bend a bit, fix a bit, and shrink a bit, simultaneously or consecutively'* (2009:197-198). While one could argue that such conclusion may render the theory useless, Lombardo and colleagues emphasise the importance of reflexivity for perceiving the enabling and constraining power factors at play.

Pfister, very critical about the gender dimension in the European Employment Strategy (EES), suggests that the gender mainstreaming approach has dramatically failed in the EES (Pfister, 2007, 2008). The problems he sees are, first, its subordination to other concepts (or 'bending' in the words of Lombardo, Meier and Verloo) like flexibility and activation in terms of employment rates through a refocus of the EES towards attainment of the Lisbon objectives, finally leading to a loss of most of its visibility. According to Pfister, gender equality in the course of the process lost its status as *necessary* ingredient of all employment and social policies. A second problem has been a shifting of the meaning of the already vague concepts of gender equality and gender mainstreaming in the course of the EES, leading to a conflation of both. What happened is that the ability to detect and to raise awareness to questions and problems of substantive inequality got lost, while gender equality became synonymous with quantitative equality in terms of employment rates (a case of 'shrinking,' as Lombardo, Meier

and Verloo would recognise it). Pfister concludes that *'without a notion of gender equality that is to be achieved, the strategy of gender mainstreaming becomes toothless'* (2007:17). His analysis confirms the analytical usefulness of the discursive politics approach suggested by Lombardo, Meier and Verloo: his accounts point to the problematic effects of processes of bending and of shrinking equality in the *practice* of gender mainstreaming implementation (as opposed to the 'discursive' realities studied by Lombardo, Meier and Verloo).

The practice of subordinating the pursuit of gender equality to other policy goals (called 'bending' by Lombardo, Meier and Verloo, and 'strategic framing' by Pollack and Hafner-Burton) has also been recognised by Jacquot (2006), who identifies this practice as 'opportunistic uses' of the gender mainstreaming approach. Where such subordination happens, gender equality is presented as a means to another end, as way of more effectively realising another policy objective, often of an economic nature (for example the competitiveness of the European economy), that is hence presented as more important. Jacquot does not mean to give a *de facto* negative connotation to the label 'opportunistic use' of gender mainstreaming, as she sees such efforts mainly stemming from femocrats who seek to insert gender equality considerations in the mainstream discourses of other policy domains, as do others (Pollack & Hafner-Burton, 2000). She considers these practices as particularly interesting because the actors who perform them succeed in grasping the political, institutional, interactional or other opportunities which the circumstances and context offer to further the goal of gender equality – independently of how this goal is defined. They are capable of rationally mobilising the resources they have at their disposal. According to Jacquot, gender mainstreaming is in this approach 'instrumentalized': the political practices are transformed into resources for gender action. Jacquot thus stresses the strategic use of stretching and bending by actors with the best of intentions.

Acknowledging both the positive effect and the risks of the 'strategic framing' practice, we can see that it may help to get gender a foothold in policy domains that were traditionally closed to gender considerations, which opens up opportunities for further steps. On the other hand, the risk that this practice entails is linked to the fact that gender equality as such is not put forward as the prime policy goal (which is not so surprising as the policy domains where this practice is recognised are not the most 'social' ones, as there are for example 'competition' or 'research' (Lombardo et al., 2009c)): gender equality is presented as a means to another end. In such reasoning, one can imagine that gender equality concerns could be abolished again at one point without much need for justification.

Morley (2007) presents gender mainstreaming as *'a strategy that claims to make women's and men's experiences an integral dimension in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes. It assesses the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies, and programmes in any area and at all levels'*. She adds to this that gender mainstreaming is a long-term strategy, with different stages of development: the first step is to identify the ways in which the status quo in effect is designed

with men in mind; the second step is to open systems up to accommodate men and women equally. All this with the ultimate goal to achieve gender equality. She emphasises that systematic interventions for change constitute the overarching principle of gender mainstreaming. It is noteworthy that the way in which she presents gender mainstreaming does in principle not exclude legislative measures nor positive action, which is in line with how I have explained my view of gender mainstreaming above.

Summarising the theoretical discussions, Morley recognises gender mainstreaming as intensely political and ideologically informed, having to negotiate tensions between gender equality and mainstream policy. She understands that some authors (Pollack & Hafner-Burton, 2000; Rao & Kelleher, 2005; Rees, 2001, 2005; Walby, 2005) so strongly believe in its promise of transformation exactly because gender mainstreaming is both attractive to gender activists and accepted by policy makers. However, at the same time, she acknowledges others who criticise gender mainstreaming as de-radicalising the feminist project because its implementation tends to take on a technocratic form, thus losing the ideological dimension of the project (Charlesworth, 2005; McGauran, 2009; Stratigaki, 2005). This technocratic threat is found in the introduction of checklists, toolkits and 'how to' guides, which would seem to suggest that gender mainstreaming is a matter of mere application, whereas gender mainstreaming requires sensitivity and awareness for an on-going process of (re-)negotiation. Morley thus recognises a central tension between vision (or ideology) and strategy, pointing to a possible problem in the conceptualisation of the political goal of gender equality in gender mainstreaming undertakings – an important suggestion.

Here it is useful to draw the attention to a broadly accepted distinction that is made by scholars between a so-called 'integrationist' versus 'agenda-setting' approach to gender mainstreaming. This distinction is based on Jahan's typology of gender mainstreaming strategies (Jahan, 1995, 1996). While Jahan extensively discusses this typology, a clear and concise definition of these approaches can be found in the OECD DAC¹⁶ *Source Book on Concepts and Approaches Linked to Gender Equality* (OECD, 1998):

- the integrationist approach builds gender issues into existing policy paradigms¹⁷: "widening women-and-gender concerns across a broad spectrum of sectors is the key strategy within this concept: the overall development agenda is not transformed, but each issue is adapted to take into account women-and-gender concerns" (1998:25);
- the agenda-setting approach implies the transformation of the existing policy agenda with a gender perspective: "the participation of women as decision makers in determining development priorities is the key strategy here: women participate in all development decisions, and through this process bring about a fundamental change in the existing development paradigm" (1998:25).

¹⁶ Development Assistance Committee

¹⁷ 'Development' policy, in the case of OECD

Where they make a distinction between an agenda-setting and an integrationist approach, authors (Lombardo, 2005; OECD, 1998) usually consider the agenda-setting approach as holding greatest transformative potential while the integrationist approach tends to be considered as bureaucratic and not producing the aspired transformations in terms of structures and processes. It is however paramount to keep in mind that these authors are referring to the policy definition stage, and not to the implementation stage – an important distinction overlooked by many. Indeed, in the absence of effective implementation, even the policy that (on paper) seems most promising will not yield transformative results.

It is worth noting that some authors (McGauran, 2009; Sainsbury & Bergqvist, 2009) have labelled as ‘integrationist’ those approaches that put more emphasis on processes, tools and inputs than on outcomes, and as such they give a different understanding to the concept ‘integrationist’ by focussing on the implementation level rather than on the policy formulation. Sainsbury and Bergqvist (2009) criticise the distinction between agenda-setting and integrationist (in the way they understand ‘integrationist’, i.e. referring to the implementation stage) as a false dichotomy, pointing out that the opposite of integration is separatism rather than altering the policy agenda, whereas the opposite of transformation is piecemeal change, while the theory presents agenda-setting as transformation. With their (Swedish) case, these authors show that integration (in terms of the development of implementation tools, instruments, processes, and institutionalisation) and agenda-setting are not mutually exclusive. This should not come as a surprise as different stages in the policy cycle are concerned: the policy making stage and the policy implementation stage.

From the above, we can conclude that it matters indeed to make the distinction between the stages in the policy process for understanding the ‘fuzziness’ of some concepts being used.

In an attempt to summarise the discussions and theories set out above, the overview table (table 2.1) presents the different views on and approaches to gender equality presented in academic literature.

Table 2.1: The different views on and approaches to gender equality

Gender equality vision or ‘model’	Sameness	Difference	Transformation
Focus	individuals’ rights	group disadvantage	systems and structures
Perspective	equal	women	gender
Strategies	equal rights equal treatment	equal opportunities specific measures / affirmative action	gender mainstreaming
Underlying principles	the individual as a whole person	democracy and participation	justice, fairness and equity
Interpretations regarded as problematic	equal = sameness	women’s difference from the male norm is the ‘problem’	?

This table shows that, despite apparent confusions, the *theoretical* discussions about concepts, visions and strategies seem to be overall coherent and not essentially contradictory. As it stands, it seems that feminist theorists have mainly argued about the rights or wrongs of pursuing sameness, difference or transformation precisely because of what they recognised and criticised as problematic interpretations of the principles underlying the 'gender equality' pursuits. The theories about concepts consider different perspectives on gender equality from an 'endpoint' point of view, i.e. 'equality', 'recognition of differences', and 'transformation' respectively. With these visions in mind, theorists consider the strategies that are supposed to lead towards that endpoint. Still, across the board, they seem to agree on the transformative aim and on the fact that the reality more often than not shows a combination of approaches, whereby the different 'visions' can be recognised in policy mixes that combine different strategies.

There remain however some issues about which gender theorists do not seem to agree: 1) the extent to which differences between men and women ought to be recognised in a gender mainstreaming approach, 2) the question whether gender mainstreaming can comprise legislative and / or specific measures, which are commonly considered as distinct approaches in their own respect. At the same time, the review of the theories has also brought to light that gender scholars' discussions about concepts mainly refer to the policy definition stage and that they tend to ignore the important distinction between policy definition and implementation (in which again the planning or design of the implementation approach can be distinguished from the actual implementation or 'roll-out'). It has become clear that gender scholars do not commonly view the policy process as a dynamic cycle.

The theory also contains some suggestions as to potential problems related to gender mainstreaming implementation, the identification of which could not have been made without the above theoretical review. One important point deals with the conceptualisation of the gender equality goal. Indeed, it is suggested that where the goal of gender equality is not clearly conceptualised (i.e. through a 'situated definition' in the light of the policy context and with an understanding of the nature of the existing gender inequality problem that is to be solved), this may lead to problematic gender mainstreaming implementation.

Another issue is the apparent contradiction between the recognition that gender mainstreaming is a long term strategy that implies and requires incremental change on the one hand and the way 'agenda-setting' is presented as a shortcut to transformation on the other hand, by suggesting it may produce short term, visible and significant effects. The absence of visible short term effects leads scholars to search for shortcomings in the theories about gender mainstreaming. It seems worthwhile to reflect on this apparent contradiction and the question of whether it is indeed a contradiction. In such an exercise, one might ask whether agenda-setting indeed implies that short term effects should be noticeable; whether there can be an alternative to incremental change if such deep changes as altering gender relations and

demolition of gender hierarchies are aspired; whether agenda-setting is indeed a recipe for turnaround change rather than incremental change; whether agenda-setting is a *conditio sine qua non* for transformation. The authors discussed above have not emphasised the need to distinguish between stages in the policy cycle where effects (or change) may occur, whereas making such a distinction can already help to clarify matters, especially when considering that the different stages also imply the involvement and mobilisation of different actors. As set out above, agenda-setting is a practice that is recognised at the *policy formulation* stage, whereas an integrationist approach tends to be attributed to the *policy implementation* stage (although not originally meant so by Jahan). Keeping in mind the different stages in the policy process, it becomes apparent that the whole policy cycle needs to be considered and assessed to allow a prediction in terms of effective gender change (transformation). While agenda-setting might produce short-term effects in terms of making policy formulation gender-sensitive, in the absence of a direct causal relation between policy formulation and policy outcomes, it does not in itself say anything about how the policy is going to be implemented, and thus cannot predict transformation.

Both Daly and Sainsbury, and Bergqvist (although the latter may be considered as adding to the confusion by altering the interpretation given to 'integrationist') have usefully pointed to the risk held by 'category thinking' by showing that theoretical insistence on different analytical models of mainstreaming gets in the way of a more realistic view of how mainstreaming actually evolves and is implemented in various contexts. Indeed, it is more productive not to regard cases *a priori* as a matter of 'either-or', but to keep open the possibility of recognising a combination of forms. Also, such an 'open' approach encourages one to consider which are the relevant contextual factors that determine the actual gender mainstreaming approach. These contextual factors will influence what can and will be done in terms of gender mainstreaming, thus 'shaping' gender mainstreaming differently in different contexts. These factors hence can explain variability in gender mainstreaming implementation.

The discursive politics theory formulated by Lombardo, Meier and Verloo offers an interesting analytic lens on the reality of policy-making, recognising its dynamic nature rather than taking a static point of view, as seen in most theories. As these authors argue that an analysis of the discursive practices might yield revealing insights in the powers at play and the enabling and constraining situations that are created, the application of such an exercise to a case study would be interesting. There is however a point that is worth noting in these authors' theory. They tend to consider strategic framing (or the subordination of a gender equality to another policy goal, what they label as 'bending') as problematic because it depoliticises the issue of gender equality by removing the dimension of conflict from it. They underline the importance of maintaining a space for 'struggle' over gender equality as a condition for progress (by allowing non-hegemonic voices access to the debate), an argument I have touched upon before (Verloo, 2005). These authors seem to ignore the contexts in which this argument is valid: feminist thinking is advanced by

allowing alternative voices to express themselves, and policy making in a field is advanced when there is space for non-hegemonic voices. In the case of strategic framing, however, feminist (non-hegemonic) voices enter the debate in a policy field that was before closed to such considerations, as pointed out by Jacquot (2006) and by Pollack and Hafner-Burton (2000). When strategic framing is regarded in this light, it does not imply per definition a de-politicisation of the issue. However, it probably remains a risky strategy that might give results, but that also comes with constraints. While 'strategic framing' has been addressed in this section under the discussion of 'concepts', it must be pointed out that it is a notion that is broader than purely conceptual. It refers to (political) acts, deliberate shifts in the presentation of the meaning of gender equality in the gender struggle process, acts that are as such also explanatory factors for certain outcomes of gender mainstreaming undertakings. It is therefore useful to study cases where strategic framing can be recognised, to analyse their contexts in terms of triggers as well as repressing elements, and to see how they impacted on gender mainstreaming.

As pointed out, the implementation of gender mainstreaming remains largely under-researched. Notably how the implementation strategy relates to the notion(s) of gender equality that are comprised in the policy decisions is not considered, nor how gender mainstreaming implementation diverges or corresponds to the strategic and operational gender equality objectives. In short, I argue that scholarly discussions remain too theoretical and limited, insufficiently informed by reality, have too little attention for the actual implementation of gender mainstreaming, and attach too much importance to transformation through 'agenda-setting' in the policy definition stage. In answer to this, I suggest to pay attention to how the gender equality goal is conceptualised and understood in the different stages of policy definition, implementation planning and actual implementation by the different actors involved in the respective stages. Furthermore, I suggest to verify, where shifts occur in the process, how these can be explained, keeping in mind the importance of institutional elements.

Operationalising the above theoretical discussion, the present research will look into how the goal of gender equality has been conceptualised and how this meaning has evolved in the implementation process of the case under review, both in time and among the actors involved. More specifically, I will verify whether a context- (or policy-)specific definition of the goal of gender equality was put forward by the DG RTD of the European Commission, and whether this goal was clearly conceptualised and institutionalised. In my case, I will establish that a dual objective was set by the Commission to enhance women's participation in EU-funded research activities and to improve the gender-sensitiveness of the research itself, and I will then investigate the extent to which this dual objective has been understood by all actors and in all stages of the research framework programme implementation. By considering the different stages, I do not only recognise that each stage involves a different set of actors, the analysis also takes into account the dynamic character of the case context in which the structures and systems for the framework implementation are set, rather than assuming a static context in which gender mainstreaming is implemented.

2.4. Prerequisites and conditions for successful gender mainstreaming

Another, maybe more promising approach than recourse to conceptual confusions to explain uneven implementation and variable outcomes of gender mainstreaming undertakings is to see successful – or, using the concept introduced earlier, ‘effective’ - implementation as depending upon a set of existing preconditions. The aim of this approach is then to assess whether the preconditions for successful mainstreaming have been fulfilled. Evidently, to be able to do so, it is necessary to theorise which are exactly these conditions. Operationalising this approach is fraught with problems. Many authors and sources offer lists of conditions and prerequisites for successful gender mainstreaming, either explicitly or implicitly. Such lists vary in length and nature of the conditions that they contain, but they hardly ever seem to suggest any specific order or degree of importance of certain conditions and neither do they seem to carry much theoretical value. Bringing together all these conditions and prerequisites put forward in existing literature is not possible within the scope of this work. Lists are rather unstructured and bits and pieces of modalities and specifications can be found in many scholars’ works. Still, as there is a clear need to clarify when and how gender mainstreaming can be successful (or uneven and variable in its outcomes), I summarise below both what the leading gender mainstreaming scholars as well as experienced practitioners put forward in terms of conditions and prerequisites for successful gender mainstreaming, with the aim to distil from the existing lists what may be the most promising or most useful explanatory factors for success or lack thereof in the light of an institutional analytical approach.

The often quoted Council of Europe (CoE) final report of the Group of Specialists on Mainstreaming (Council of Europe, 1998) identifies the main prerequisites which, if not in place, may pose threats to the implementation of gender mainstreaming. The Group of Specialists recognises that their list is based on reflection rather than on experience, given the limited experience with implementing gender mainstreaming at the time of the report (1998). Let us have a look at the conditions put forward by the CoE.

A first prerequisite suggested in this report is the need to continue specific gender equality policy, so that gender equality issues do not disappear altogether when gender mainstreaming is introduced. The important interdependence between both approaches is thus emphasised. Another crucial point is the need to apprehend the broader concept of equality, beyond a narrow interpretation as antidiscrimination and *de jure* equality. This point relates to the meaning of gender equality, as addressed in the previous section. Mainstreaming requires a focus on gender relations, rather than addressing only women with ‘interventions that target only one-half of the players and not the game’, to use the words of Benschop and Verloo (2011:280). Mainstreaming furthermore requires procedural changes in the policy-making process, as actors and departments who previously had an exclusive competence need to cooperate more tightly to make a transversal policy objective (gender equality) successful. This may require rethinking approaches to policy-making, changes in organisational culture or the creation of new channels for consultation. Verloo confirms in a paper with Benschop that regular policy

makers, who have to identify and change the routines and fossilised norms that (re)produce gender inequality have to call on and cooperate with gender experts to combine and confront the knowledge about policies with knowledge about gender in organisations, as Benschop and Verloo put it (2011).

Adequate policy tools and techniques, suited to the strategy of mainstreaming are also necessary conditions for proper implementation. New policy tools might thus have to be developed.

Those actors, mostly bureaucrats, responsible for the implementation of gender mainstreaming are required to have sufficient knowledge of gender equality issues. As the actors normally involved in policy-making are not gender equality experts (as opposed to the actors in 'traditional' equality policy machineries), efforts will be needed to build up knowledge among all actors and learning processes to develop the capacity to turn mainstreaming strategies into practice. If such knowledge and capacity are missing, the danger exists that actors fail to identify gender interests or to implement gender equality policies.

Finally, the CoE report points out that gender mainstreaming requires the will and firm commitment of policy-makers to redress the existing imbalances between women and men and to tackle the reasons for these imbalances. This implies that the necessary financial and human resources are made available. Not doing so undermines the achievement of positive results, which in turn undermines the success, and also the credibility, of gender mainstreaming as a strategy.

We will now look at what subsequent academic studies have added to the CoE list. Verloo (2005) builds on Squires' theorisation of gender mainstreaming as a strategy which is in theory capable of transformation, but potentially weak in terms of effective political change (Squires, 1999), and suggests that real agenda-setting can be made possible if space is made in the policy process for non-hegemonic voices. Otherwise, in a structure of inequality, transformation cannot come about. Verloo criticises the CoE Group of Specialists' report's enumeration of the techniques and tools for gender mainstreaming as technocratic and ignoring the political dimension, not providing space for normative, feminist discussions.

Daly (2005) also criticises the 'technocratisation' of gender mainstreaming. She points out that the practice of gender mainstreaming does not follow the theory. Whereas the theory presents gender mainstreaming as a staged process, departing from an analysis of the mechanisms that (re-)produce inequalities towards redressing these through putting into place a range of measures to establish equitable systems and structures, the practice does not generally follow these stages but rather adopts some components, tools or techniques, often in the absence of an overall framework. This leads, according to Daly, to an overarching, if not excessive, focus on the need for policy-makers to acquire skills and implement a set of methods, detracting attention from the goals to which these means are aimed and the extent to which the goals are reached.

In line with Verloo, McGauran (2009) subscribes the view that an emphasis on an expert-bureaucratic approach rather than on greater participation with civil society weakens

the transformative effects of gender mainstreaming. She refers to the distinction in policy implementation mechanisms outlined by Lindblom in 1959, claiming that the same applies to gender mainstreaming implementation. In the 'rational-comprehensive' approach, as recognised by Lindblom, policy actions are formulated based on a comprehensive analysis and a clear means-end vision in view of objectives pursued; whereas in an 'incrementalist' approach, policy objectives and action are intertwined, the causal means-end relations are less clear, and agreement between different parties on the best course of action seems to be the greatest concern. In the latter, policy analysis and evaluation tend to be underdeveloped. The view that mainstreaming *should* be a staged process, places it in the rational-comprehensive category, whereas assuming that in practice an incrementalist approach can be followed in which the stages may become blurred might yield a better understanding of the reality. This distinction between the two approaches underlines again the importance of taking into account the different stages in the policy process that are involved when analysing gender mainstreaming implementation. The above authors have thus emphasised not only the prerequisite to address gender mainstreaming as a staged process, but also the importance of involving civil society actors in the process.

The argumentation of another set of theorists seems to be centred on the need for culture change in the organisations that take up gender mainstreaming. Mazey (2000) describes gender mainstreaming as a potentially radical strategy, although how it is precisely to be implemented in practice is not clear: *"It will require EU and national policy-makers to review critically the way in which they conceptualise policy problems. Such a change will entail questioning of deeply embedded cultural values and policy frames, supported by existing institutions and powerful advocacy coalitions. For these reasons, gender mainstreaming is arguably a deceptively simple concept that is likely to be extremely difficult to operationalise."* (2000:342-343).

In line with Mazey, Woodward (2004) suggests that for gender mainstreaming to be effective, gender awareness must be institutionalised in the organisation, and this requires not only training but also cultural acceptance. She points out that institutional innovation, and thus also gender change, 'requires a context where values are present that can be mobilised in service of the new institution.'

Also Charlesworth (2005) is critical about gender mainstreaming because she sees its implementation as depoliticising the goal through a rather bland, bureaucratic acceptance of the method. Charlesworth mainly blames the gender mainstreaming approach as it has been adopted for not having led to any investigation of the gendered nature of the organisations themselves. As long as the general structures of power, based on hierarchies of sex and gender, in the international institutions are not transformed, she does not believe gender mainstreaming can be effective.

Benschop and Verloo (2006) show that the genderedness of organisations structurally impedes gender mainstreaming. Also the assumption of cooperation among the various actors in gender mainstreaming is in their view problematic. Rather, there are underlying forces that interfere

in the process of gender mainstreaming which have to be faced and addressed explicitly. These researchers conclude that *'gender mainstreaming is not breaching the genderedness of organisations in the way it aspires to, precisely because it involves the inclusion of regular actors'* (2006:31).

Benschop and Verloo (2011) take a closer look at how gender theories and organisational change theories can feed each other. These authors identify some gaps in the existing theoretical models and conclude that approaches aimed at transformative gender change tend to address the structural rather than the individual level. They point to the seemingly paradoxical situation that feminist academics express a manifest preference for structural transformation, while at the same time this transformation is presented as a mission impossible. These authors emphasise the need to address attitudes and the underlying emotional stratum (2011:287). Benschop and Verloo consider gender equality infrastructures in organisations, such as equality/diversity departments, taskforces or coordinators, as holding a high potential to bring about change, although this potential depends on their ascribed authority, power, and their ability to engage in alliances with women's groups, gender experts or other gender change agents. These authors argue that organisations must be willing to question their own structures and processes as well as the attitudes of the individuals they are composed of, in other words their own culture and features, so that these do not stand in the way for effective gender mainstreaming – thus doubling the challenge.

Roggeband and Verloo (2006) develop related arguments based on their case study of the development and use of the Dutch gender impact assessment (GIA) system of which the application seems random and its success relative (or, in my words, the GIA was applied variably and appeared rather ineffective). They seek to identify the factors contributing to success and failure applying a political process approach, based on social movement theory (as did Pollack and Hafner-Burton, 2000), and looking at both the level of structure and of agency. These authors draw the attention to the inherent tensions in the strategy of gender mainstreaming. These tensions mainly rely around the conflictual situation of states which on the one hand at the level of explicit policy making commit to gender equality as a political goal, but on the other hand are *de facto* constituents of the reproduction of gender inequality: *'at the level of discursive processes deeply rooted in their histories, they often work against this very same goal'* (2006:618). Their analysis learns that for GIA in the Netherlands, while a few crucial actors could benefit from political opportunities and good use was made of discursive and political opportunities, mobilising networks did not play a significant role and the political support for the instrument remained limited. Still, expertise and resources were available. Although the instrument was informed by an existing theoretical framework and criteria, it did have a 'freezing' effect and could as such be seen as a technocratic and thus potentially depoliticising instrument. Roggeband and Verloo point out the importance of individual actors motivated to take up the instrument. When, however, such official left, not much progress was made anymore. The recognition that an important barrier may rely in the organisational

“texture” (the officers, civil servants whose ‘invisible power’ for the success or failure of an instrument is rather large), in other words the ‘actors’, leads to the identification of another condition, namely the need for support from and motivation of the individuals that have to take up action.

Roggeband and Verloo formulate some important conclusions in view of their case analysis that deal with conditions. First of all, they conclude that, while it is generally accepted that top commitment is essential for gender mainstreaming, “ground floor commitment” is just as important (2006:627). Second, they attribute limits in learning effects – i.e. that positive experiences will trigger a more favourable attitude towards the instrument – to a lack of shared memory and continuity of the actors involved: ‘policy learning has proven to be complicated if only for the constant changes in actors and domains involved.[...] Although these dynamics may limit the accumulation of learning effects, they also create opportunities. In each new policy cycle new coalitions can be formed, new framings may emerge to advocate gender mainstreaming. Conditions of *liquidity* in a bureaucracy – rapidly changing actors, positions and competences – result in ever-changing opportunities’ (2006:627-628). Roggeband and Verloo borrow the liquidity concept¹⁸ from Zygmunt Bauman’s Liquid Modernity theory (Bauman, 2000) to signify an organisation upon which it seems hard to impossible to get any grip. As Bauman puts it in the foreword of his book: *“fluids do not keep any shape for long (...), in describing fluids, leaving time out of account would be a grievous mistake. Descriptions of fluids are all snapshots, and they need a date at the bottom of the picture.”* (2000:2) Roggeband and Verloo do not expand much on defining a ‘liquid organisation’ and describing its characteristics, but they do suggest what the implications appear to be for gender mainstreaming. Notably by pointing out the liquidity of an organisation as an impeding factor for successful gender mainstreaming implementation, they suggest that ‘stability’ within an organisation (whereby knowledge and capacity can be built up and stay in place) might be a condition for effective gender mainstreaming, while instability creates variability in the conditions and hence in the implementation.

Another interesting source listing important conditions for effective gender mainstreaming are the manuals, guidelines and toolkits developed by gender practitioners as instruments to support the actors in charge of setting up a gender mainstreaming strategy and implementing it. This category of documents is generally considered as ‘grey literature’ by scholars and seldom find their way into academic debates (Benschop & Verloo, 2011). What it contains does not find its way to academic debates and does not help building the academic knowledge

¹⁸ It is worthwhile to note that the word ‘liquidity’ as used by Roggeband and Verloo to describe the features of an organisation does in no way bear the same meaning as Pascal Lamy, former EC Trade Commissioner, attributes to the word to label and characterise governance systems. Lamy compares governance systems to the three states of mass: solid, liquid and gaseous. He labels as gaseous the coexistence of sovereign states without any hierarchical differentiation. Solid is a system which produces rules that it interprets “autonomously” and whose primacy and direct applicability it guarantees through a legal system. In between then is the liquid state, neither entirely horizontal nor entirely vertical in essence. While Lamy called the EU ‘solid’ in a speech in 2006 (Lamy, 2006), he labelled the European integration process in ‘a kind of liquid state’ in 2009 (Lamy, 2009).

base. A probable explanation for this is offered by Lombardo, Meier and Verloo (2009a), who suggest that hegemonic discourses in feminist theory tend to block self-reflexivity and openness to improving the knowledge base in feminist theory for atypical sources because these are considered as moves away from politicisation. Building on this reflection, Bustelo and Verloo (2009) argue that if based on sound feminist theory and empirical knowledge, technical instruments such as gender impact assessments need not be depoliticising, but can be a valuable contribution to further gender equality. Also, reports of such exercises can feed the knowledge base in feminist theory.

Indeed, what many of these 'grey' documents put forward is more often than not informed by feminist theory and complemented by useful practical warnings and suggestions or good practice examples, based on the practitioner's experience from witnessing and accompanying 'real' implementation processes.¹⁹ A typical example of a good manual is the one developed by Derbyshire (2002) for the UK Department for International Development (DFID). In this manual, Derbyshire distinguishes four steps in gender mainstreaming, to which she links specific conditions: step one consists of a gender-informed analysis, for which sex disaggregated data and gender analytical information is needed; step two consists in establishing the agenda for action, whereby women as well as men need to be involved in the decision-making; step three is context-specific action geared towards promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women, backed up with staff and budgets, and monitored and evaluated based on indicators of change; step four consists of organisational capacity building to develop the necessary skills, knowledge and commitment of staff in policy-making, planning and implementation roles. Such capacity-building actions need to be explicitly included in the policy framework, backed up with staff and budgets, and monitored and reviewed. If such conditions are not met 'policy evaporation' happens: formal gender equality policy commitments evaporate before implementation and remain paper commitments only (2002:34).

Derbyshire further points out that gender equality in the workplace and gender equality in (public policy) service delivery are inextricably linked, thus promoting a 'practice what you preach' principle. This argument relates to the earlier set out condition of a gender equality respectful culture in the organisations that take up gender mainstreaming. She also underlines the importance of both the commitment and the leadership of senior management for effective gender mainstreaming: to properly oversee the implementation of this cross-cutting theme, to signal the importance attached to the issue by making demands for updates on progress and by holding staff who are responsible for implementation accountable for action. The importance of accountability for gender mainstreaming results, especially in a context of implementation of a horizontal policy concern in usually vertically organised structures, is also emphasised by

¹⁹ Some examples are: the 'Gender Mainstreaming in Practice' toolkit published by UNDP (Niemanis, 2002); the 'Gender mainstreaming manual' published by JämStöd, the Swedish Gender Mainstreaming Support Committee (Boman, Eklund, & Löfgren, 2007); the training manual 'Mainstreaming gender into Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) programmes' published by SNV Rwanda, PROTOS and the Rwandese Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion (SNV Rwanda; PROTOS; Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion (Rwanda), 2009).

McGauran (2009) as well as by Hafner-Burton and Pollack (2009) and by Woodward (2004). Derbyshire recommends to involve as many staff as possible and where relevant also external stakeholders in the process of the formulation of a mainstreaming policy because *“this promotes ‘ownership’ of the policy; enhances understanding and commitment to gender equality issues; ensures that the policy fits with the organisational culture, structures and procedures; and substantially increases the chance that the policy will be implemented”* (2002:34).

Rao and Kelleher (2005), practitioners with long-standing experience in gender and institutional change in development contexts, argue for deep institutional structure change as a necessary requirement for successfully delivering on gender equality. They define the ‘deep structure’ of organisations as *‘the collection of taken-for-granted values, and ways of thinking and working, that underlie decision-making and action’* (2005:64). They suggest that the policies to promote equality are not institutionally embedded in the organisations that have to implement them, which hampers their success. Organisational structures tend to reinforce the power of a few, who, for the most part are unwilling to give up the privileges of power and hence actively resist to the changes that gender equality efforts pursue. These authors link gender theory to organisation and change theories arguing for more overtly political analysis and a political component in all approaches to bringing about gender equality. These authors also point out some important conditions. First of all, the importance of better resourcing the actors working on gender issues, and more importantly, to make them part of decision-making. Ensuring a strong voice for gender equality advocates in decision-making is crucial for having gender concerns be represented in the day-to-day organisational discussions. Are further needed: strong leadership and accountability structures, including performance appraisal and better monitoring. Enabling environments must be created that are open to women’s groups demanding rights and access to power and resources.

Considering the above, it appears that various authors argue that the deeply rooted structures of power, gender hierarchies, values and frames that are inherent to the organisation itself will determine to what extent it can effectively implement gender mainstreaming processes. Also Díaz González (2001), whose work is founded in a gender and development context, argues that for achieving meaningful, well-balanced, stable and deep-rooted gender change in organisations, it is necessary to concentrate change efforts on the basic paradigms that govern people’s systems of values and beliefs, assumptions, mental models and views on their relations to others, both at the individual and at the collective level. For that, it is not sufficient to focus on attitudes and behaviours, processes and procedures. *‘Changes limited to structures, guidelines and physical surroundings tend to prove superficial and are quite fragile’* (2001:1). Therefore, *‘given the demands of a gender-sensitive organisational change, the organisational culture is the main arena of change. For transformations to be deep and lasting – that is, effective, real and stable – the key features of the existing organisational culture must be directly and explicitly examined’* (2001:30). Her reasoning with respect to this argument is of particular interest because it confirms those

feminist institutionalists like Mackay, Monro and Waylen (2009) who suggest that feminist political science can benefit from drawing upon sociological institutionalism by distinguishing between the formal and visible aspects of an organisation and its informal, invisible aspects. Díaz González explains that *'in organisations, tensions prevail between the individual and the collective, the internal and the external (context), the formal and the informal, as well as between their internal subsystems'* (2001:4). Organisations are characterised by visible, noticeable, objective 'external' aspects like group dynamics, expressed values, procedures, manuals, etc., as well as by 'internal' aspects that are much less observable, let alone quantifiable. These are expressed in meanings, attitudes, beliefs, internalised values, ... Access can be gained to the first external category through simple observation and to the second, internal, category only through interpretation. Díaz González argues that organisations, by means of their constituents, the people who are part of it, are living systems and thus capable of adaptation, creativity, flexibility and learning – as well as to disorganisation and re-organisation (or self-repair). Nevertheless, it seems that many organisations become like machines because their members see themselves as programmed for their task. Therefore, the first task might be to make these people believe otherwise and to transform this line of thinking. For organisations, it is indispensable to understand the logic of change when engaging in a substantial transformation – like gender mainstreaming – which implies breaking with past paradigms. Embarking on change implies acceptance of its realities: that is recognition that change will bring along uncertainties (difficult for those who reject modifications to the status quo), processes of imbalance and rebalance, order and disorder, drawbacks and modifications, advances and stand-stills - all with the aim to gain something better than more of the same.

Díaz González concludes her argument – as already set out above – by claiming that the organisational culture is the main arena of change when gender-sensitive organisational change is on the agenda. She warns for superficial change through easily recognisable and measurable operations, systems and procedures only. These are changes in form but not in content and easily allow the people involved to slip back into old 'inertias' and habits (2001:30). The organisational culture can, according to Díaz González, be regarded as a system of meanings shared by a collectivity, a subsystem within the larger system that is the organisation. She stresses its systemic and dynamic nature as well as its transformative potential. There are a number of premises in her proposed notion of culture: cultures are open and dynamic systems that are not hegemonic and coherent wholes, that are not objective realities but systems of meanings built and shared by their members, and that cannot be changed by manipulating their external appearance alone. Especially the non-hegemonic and non-coherent aspect of a culture, and thus also of an organisational culture, is noteworthy. Díaz González points out that *'different types of logic coexist within the same culture, different ways of conceiving things and getting them done. Relatively strong tendencies, common to the majority, are detectable in an organisational culture. But these tendencies can coexist with "marginal" tendencies, which are of secondary importance in comparison with issues that are more critical for the organisation, such as who occupies the positions of power and decision-making. (...) Different departments*

or divisions usually generate their own dynamics, values and practices, messages and effects on gender relations' (2001:33). The condition for effective gender mainstreaming is then that the value systems in place are favourable to gender equality considerations.

In relation to the dual reality of an organisation, represented by its formal and externally visible aspects on the one hand and the informal, much less noticeable aspects on the other hand, Díaz González pointed out (as set out above) that insights into the second category can be gained only through interpretation. To this I would add that insight can also be gained through participation (and of course interpretation) by 'privileged observers.' Indeed, participation over a longer time span in the functioning of the organisation, be it through secondments as national officer (as was the case e.g. for Stratigaki) or through long-term service contracts, allows to experience the organisation from the inside by taking part in meetings; observing how interests are defended, interpreted, understood and taken into account; how decisions take form: all elements that allow access to the internal, informal aspects of the organisation. This is important because precisely these elements can be considered as indicators of the 'deep structure' of the organisation, as defined by Rao and Kelleher.

I do not claim to have drawn with the above an exhaustive picture of existing lists of conditions which would allow for effective gender mainstreaming. The above allows us however to conclude that existing lists are rather disparate and unstructured, varying widely in various respects: in the number and nature of conditions put forward; in their origin, departing from reflection or 'common sense' (like the CoE's Group of Specialists), building on other theories (Verloo, 2005), or rather springing from empirical observations (Derbyshire, 2002; Díaz González, 2001; Rao & Kelleher, 2005). They also vary in the theories in which they are grounded: gender theory (Daly, 2005), political theory (Mazey, 2000; McGauran, 2009), social movement theory (Verloo, 2006), development theory (Díaz González 2001; Rao and Kelleher 2005), and/ or organisational change theory (Benschop & Verloo, 2011; Díaz González, 2001).

While the existing lists of conditions may appear confusing at first sight, there are some commonalities too: none of the lists makes an attempt to rank conditions in order of importance or undertake to attach importance levels to the individual conditions; none of the lists claims to be exhaustive; authors do not generally point out the link between the conditions they identify and any specific institutional (or other) context but rather present them as universally valid, and neither are conditions linked to particular stages in the policy process. Another observation that can be made is that some, but not all, of the conditions put forward by the CoE are repeated and emphasised by scholars. Considering these observations, it can be concluded that the existing theory on prerequisites for effective gender mainstreaming is hardly operational.

This opens space for reconfiguring existing lists, for example based on importance; or for making a selection of key requirements by combining (and possibly adding) requirements that are valid for a given, specific situation or context. Anyhow, more specificity in the formulation of conditions would help to operationalise and to strengthen the theory.

One possible way to bring some order in the conditions mentioned is by trying to sort out their importance. A number of conditions can be recognised as standing out more than others, and this might be a signal of their importance. Furthermore, it is worthwhile to identify which conditions fit the institutional analytical approach, and to check their validity in the given case. Below, I put forward four key conditions for effective gender mainstreaming that can be recognised in existing works and that also fit the frame of an institutional approach for analysing gender mainstreaming implementation.

- The willingness of the organisation to question and to effectively address the deeply rooted structures of power, gender hierarchies, values and frames that exist within the institution itself which is to assume responsibility for gender mainstreaming (Díaz González, 2001; Charlesworth, 2005; Mazey, 2000; Rao and Kelleher, 2005; Derbyshire ,2002; and less explicitly also Benschop and Verloo, 2011).
- Tackling gender mainstreaming implementation as a staged process, consisting of the following stages: thorough analysis and questioning of existing structures precedes the planning and definition of actions (Daly 2005; McGauran 2009; Derbyshire 2002) and (to which I add) of structural provisions, and is followed by careful and comprehensive equipment of all actors (with tools and resources), and duly monitored implementation;
- Consultation with and involvement of civil society (Verloo 2006; McGauran 2009; Derbyshire 2002; Mazey 2000) and/or experts during the policy process;
- Accountability structures and systems, or ‘hard incentives’: holding people responsible for the actions undertaken and their results (Derbyshire 2002; McGauran 2009; Hafner-Burton and Pollack 2009; Woodward 2004).

While these four conditions might be determining factors, irrespective of specific contexts, this is not to say that no other conditions may be important. Indeed, some prerequisites might seem too evident to point out when it is assumed that the respective gender mainstreaming undertakings are taken on seriously. Support from the highest levels in the organisation’s hierarchy and sufficient resources are just two examples of what could be such ‘basic’ requirements. On the other hand, I would argue that the latter examples of ‘conditions’ imply the above: in other words, if the mentioned conditions are fulfilled, there *is* support from the highest levels and resources *will be* provided – albeit that variations in time and locus (e.g. different departments within one organisation) may of course occur.

While the above list is in itself not *a priori* ranked in order of importance, I have put the conditions in what could be considered some sort of chronological order in the policy process: from a basic requirement, inherent to the organisation itself, over implementation to supervising, monitoring and evaluating what is, or not, done.

In the light of the present work, and especially in relation to the first of the above conditions, I wish to highlight Díaz González’ argument of co-existence of variations within a culture, and also within an organisational culture, notably in how it expresses itself in terms of gender relations and its valuing of gender equality. As I argue that insights in the ‘deep structure’

and locally reigning attitudes towards gender equality as a policy goal may help understand why gender mainstreaming implementation does (not) yield the expected outcomes, I will in this work verify to what extent these (local) attitudes (and evolutions therein) are useful for explaining the findings of the empirical research. By comparing (gender mainstreaming implementation in) different loci in the institution - different units within the directorate-general in my case - and by paying attention to those elements that may reveal the local attitudes towards gender equality as a policy goal, I will not only try to demonstrate the co-existence of different attitudes within the institution, but also show how these have impacted differentially on the gender mainstreaming implementation.

In circumstances of 'favourable' attitudes towards gender change it can be assumed that the first of the above conditions will be fulfilled, namely the organisation should be willing to question and to effectively address the deeply rooted structures of power, gender hierarchies, values and frames that exist within the institution itself which is to assume responsibility for gender mainstreaming. Furthermore, the organisation would be willing to do what is necessary to render its gender mainstreaming undertakings effective, or in other words to ensure that the key requirements for successful mainstreaming are fulfilled. Conversely, where there are clear signs that the conditions for effective gender mainstreaming are not fulfilled, this situation can be interpreted as the result of an unfavourable local attitude towards gender change, internalised norms and values that strive to maintain gender inequalities.

In summary, I have in this section presented four conditions for successful gender mainstreaming which I have argued to be more important than others, as offering more explanatory power for the analysis of success or failure in gender mainstreaming. Together, they encompass both the institutional level as well as the level of the individual actors who are responsible for the implementation of gender mainstreaming. Analysing whether these conditions have been fulfilled in specific parts of the case being studied implies an unravelling of the process by considering carefully the institutional elements on the one hand and each of the actors who are expected to contribute to the process on the other hand.

In the work that follows, I will seek to explain the findings of the empirical research in the light of the fulfilment, or not, of the above-identified conditions for successful gender mainstreaming. I will thus test the empirical value of the four suggested key conditions.

2.5. Resistance to gender change

There is yet another element that might explain the discrepancy between the theoretically promising potential of gender mainstreaming and its weaker than expected or uneven outcomes, and that is precisely its potential: the fact that it is potentially such a powerful strategy, invokes very strong resistance. In this light, it may be considered somewhat surprising that resistance, the forms in which it may present itself in various contexts and how these relate to gender mainstreaming approaches and their effectiveness, has remained rather understudied. As a consequence, the notion of resistance has hardly been operationalised in the existing literature.

Gender theorists do in general recognise that resistance is a typical response to change and thus also presents itself when gender equality strategies are discussed, planned and implemented. It is indeed not unlikely that gender mainstreaming being imposed as a top-down decision on those that are expected to implement it can cause a 'natural reaction' of resistance or opposition which is however not necessarily to be read as hostility to the notion of gender equality. This reasoning is in line with Foucault's argument that wherever power is exercised, there is resistance (Foucault, 1982).

Some gender scholars add, maybe a bit too easily, that resistance can be explained by the unequal power relations in favour of men, which men do not want to see altered. Several authors also point out that resistance manifests itself in different forms, sometimes overt, sometimes hidden behind what appears as a cooperative attitude. In some works, there is a hint of frustration and even bitterness (Longwe, 1997; Stratigaki, 2005) over disappointing progress towards gender equality and the many barriers and difficulties that are met in the process. Such an attitude might cause a mental state that blocks openness for the consideration of other possible explanations and realities, or variations in (what appears as) resistance. This deserves to be explored. But let us first take a closer look at what can be found about resistance, its origins and forms in the existing gender literature.

The importance of the institutional context is pointed out by Mazey (2000), who reminds us that institutions, as a collection of interrelated rules and routines, structure political interactions and affect policy outcomes. They hereby "*privilege certain interests over others in terms of access and influence*" and therefore "*policy-making bodies and implementation agencies constitute important 'filters' which may either support or resist policy change*" (2000: 339). Mazey thus suggests that the institutional character or culture is an explanatory factor for the degree of resistance gender equality initiatives are confronted with. Building on this argument, it can be assumed that in institutions where power relations are more equal, or where attitudes towards gender equality are more favourable, there will be less resistance to gender change.

This seems to be confirmed by Benschop and Verloo (2011) who compare the gender change project at policy-making and organisational level. They confirm that the transformative approaches to gender change in policy-making are theoretically promising as addressing the structural levels, but evoke resistance precisely because of their potential for a more radical analysis. This resistance is a serious impediment for effective progress towards gender equality. Looking at the organisational level, resistance to change is strongest when the existing organisational culture, norms, beliefs, attitudes and values are affected by the change efforts. Of course, this can be expected to be the case insofar the existing norms, beliefs and values divert from equity and equality principles.

In an earlier work, Benschop and Verloo (2006), in their assessment of a case project in the Ministry of the Flemish Community in Belgium, situated resistance with top officials against specific actions. The resistance expressed itself in a choice for 'gender neutrality' as the project aim, whereby the explicit addressing of 'gender bias' was avoided. The researchers' situational

analysis of the gendered organisation was faced with significant resistance and denial. The identification of 'shortcomings' in the organisation was interpreted as an accusation and this evoked resistance and escape tendencies. Resistance in this case can thus be attributed to fear of being personally exposed as not (having been) doing a proper job. The researchers found themselves unable to change this perception and concluded that the lower power of the change agents (or –facilitators) in relation to the individuals in the organisation that needed to be sensitised were important hindrances for effective change. Linking this argument with the conditions for effective gender mainstreaming identified in the previous section, the power that was found lacking on the part of the change agents was a necessary resource that was missing. These actors were thus insufficiently equipped for their task – meaning that the second condition appeared not (or insufficiently) fulfilled.

Analysing the uneven results of the implementation of gender impact assessments (GIA) in the Netherlands, Roggeband and Verloo (2006) conclude that conflicting policy frames between *"feminist policy entrepreneurs and gender experts, and the gender-blind policy paradigms of state officials proved to be a crucial obstacle for implementation"* (2006:625). They report that the GIA results caused resentment, irritation and resistance amongst civil servants who do not see gender mainstreaming as a policy priority. In this context, the GIA was regarded as uncomfortable, costly and of little use, and therefore faced rather strong opposition. They argue that the conceptualisation of the policy-making process with technocratic policy makers and administrators who do not have interests themselves is a myth that blocks a more productive understanding of the reality. They suggest that civil servants should be considered as active players in what is essentially a power game. This would help explain certain attitudes on their part as forms of resistance and in this way as an integral part of the gender problematic. These authors have demonstrated the aggregate, negative power of inertia on the part of individuals in an organisation, whereby collective non-action translates into an effective form of resistance. This is an important observation, which shows how the level of the individuals relates to the institutional level, how non-action on the part of a collective of individuals has an incapacitating effect on the organisation.

Lombardo and Meier (2009) point to another form of resistance in their analysis of the discursive construction of gender equality and what such discursive practices can do in the policy-making context. They suggest that in the dynamic reality of policy-making, policy documents reflect the attempts of the actors to bridge their positions in pursuit of some form of coherence in the framing of a policy issue. Issues can thus be strategically framed so that they resonate with existing dominant goals (Verloo, 2001), which helps to avoid or to overcome resistance. However, it also occurs that inconsistencies infiltrate policy documents, for example when gender equality is proclaimed while the means to realise this goal are not provided. This happens when actors consciously want to withhold far-reaching policy commitments, and is thus done as deliberate act of resistance. This form of resistance is commonly labelled as 'lip service'.

Turning to the view of practitioners, some interesting points on resistance can be identified. Derbyshire (2002) is of the opinion that not everything that appears as resistance is necessarily an expression of hostility or refusal of acceptance of the gender equality objectives. What appears as resistance may actually be explained in part by an insufficient staff capacity in gender mainstreaming. Many staff might be sympathetic to the issues of gender equality, but lack confidence, understanding or skills, or are under-resourced. At the same time, Derbyshire does recognise that there will always be a proportion of people that are hostile to the notion of gender equality, implying that 'real' resistance is linked to hostility.

The OECD 'DAC Source Book on Concepts and Approaches Linked to Gender Equality' (1998), in its section on resistance, presents a comprehensive discussion of different forms of resistance to gender change as well as possible strategies to overcome them. It recognises that *'resistance can be conscious or unconscious; it can take place at various levels (personal and bureaucratic) and can come from women as well as men'* (1998:63).

Díaz González (2001) points out that 'gender change' means transforming (and not just improving) what exists, breaking with the existing order and rebuilding anew the norms and perspectives. Especially when questioning the assumptions about the relations between men and women, it is likely that attempts to transform such fundamental attitudes will produce psychological resistance, fear and uncertainty. Moreover, applying new learning implies 'unlearning' what previously was taken for granted and also behaving in accordance with the newly acquired approach. Logically, altering values and habits in organisations, at the individual and at the collective level, cannot be expected to happen overnight. It is a long term process. Díaz González draws attention to the fact that resistance is inherent in processes of change and can be expressed in various ways: by trivialising or ridiculing the situation; by denying the existence of inequality; by blaming a specific group of women (or men) only; by not undertaking action to remedy the situation; by carrying out unnecessary or inadequate research; by assigning responsibility to solve the matter to someone incapable; or by pointing out the exceptions to make clear that change took place already. Resistances must be recognised as expressions of persistence (or conservative forces) in organisations that constitute conflicting forces with change. At the same time, they illustrate how truly dynamic a cultural system is, in which both receptivity to change and resistance to it are expressed. *"Resistances can emerge as a result of ignorance, fear or anxiety about a broad range of subjects. The answers to them are not confrontations but dialogue and negotiation instead"* (2001:24). She argues that resistance offers an opportunity to go deeper into understanding the dynamics of organisations.

Rao and Kelleher (2005) explain resistance to gender change by pointing at the deeply rooted masculine norms and standards which still prevail in many organisations, and the gendered power relations keeping most power with a handful of men at the top of the hierarchies. These authors consider it as a necessity to exactly target the 'deep structure' of the organisation to

make gender change possible, thus emphasising the political dimension of any effort to realise gender change. Recognising that realising such deep change as the evolution of values is a long process, they suggest that *'incremental changes must be perceived and understood as valued results, knowing that gender equality is a long-term goal.'*

Longwe (Longwe, 1995, 1997) argues that gender-oriented policies tend to evaporate within bureaucracies that are characterised by their patriarchal nature and power relations. She claims that the consensus discourse, present in most bureaucracies, hides the essence of the problem: that the overt and the covert realities in organisations have opposing interests, values, rules and objectives. While bureaucratic principles demand policy implementation, patriarchal principles demand evaporation – and both contradictory and antagonistic interests continue to survive within bureaucracies. However, when officials in charge of policy implementation dilute or ignore gender equality policy provisions (the latter behaviour can be labelled 'non-action'), the official in question is actually re-making policy. *"Negation of a policy automatically becomes policy intervention, entailing the assumption of powers which are not given in the chain of command and which therefore contradict a basic principle of bureaucracy."* (1997:150). As such evaporation of policy for the advancement of women does not happen 'on occasion,' which could be understood as a mistake, but occurs as a pattern, she concludes that other than bureaucratic Weberian norms must be operating: norms that protect masculine values and power, by depoliticising the efforts towards gender equality, as an undeniable form of resistance. Longwe emphasises what others suggested, namely that bureaucracies should not be treated as politically neutral, as this is what they themselves claim to be.

Braithwaite (2000), an expert gender consultant who has worked on assignments for the European Commission for many years, analysed the implementation of gender mainstreaming in the EU Structural Funds. She states (2000:11) that in the European Commission, *"there is resistance to discussing gender, in part due to fear of feminism, in part due to the institutional culture, which rewards 'male' behaviour (for example, in working late into the evening)."* She thus suggests that within the institution there are (perceived) conflicting interests on the part of the officials that hold them back where gender equality efforts are concerned, thereby confirming Longwe's argument of clashing overt and covert realities. In relation to the organisational features, Braithwaite confirms *"there is a strong male bias in the culture of the institution; in gender balance in staffing, particularly at middle and top management levels; working practices are rarely based on consultation and collaboration; and workloads are incompatible with family responsibilities"* (2000:11). As a specific example of resistance, Braithwaite accounts of a form of sabotage, whereby the reports from studies and other documents on equal opportunities, initiated by a motivated female civil servant, had not been published or widely disseminated, or only so late that they could not influence anymore the decision-making.

Stratigaki, a scholar who has worked in the European Commission for nearly a decade, provides

a detailed account of how gender mainstreaming entered and got adopted in the European Commission (Stratigaki, 2005) and confirms Braithwaite's arguments. She explains that the potential held by a more radical analysis of policies invoked by a transformative approach invited strong resistance in the European Commission. Male-dominated decision-making bodies reacted by adopting the rhetoric of gender mainstreaming, but using it to erode positive action and thus *de facto* to weaken the gender equality project (a form of resistance which could be labelled as 'hijacking the gender mainstreaming policy'). Stratigaki claims that the resistance is to the goal of gender equality rather than to the strategy of gender mainstreaming. She furthermore points out that resistance in the EC typically takes the form of understaffing, under-budgeting, or insufficient training rather than active opposition (2005:447). She highlights the role of individual key players – politicians and civil servants – in specific decisions, both for advancing as for blocking progress towards gender equality (2005:166).

Jacquot (2006), on the other hand, basing herself on an analysis of written sources and a number of interviews with European Commission officials and 'privileged observers', argues that the conceptual confusion surrounding gender mainstreaming has helped overcome resistance at the EU level, and that the ambiguity of what gender mainstreaming entails has eased its acceptance. Indeed, she argues that it is exactly the co-existence of the multitude of conceptual interpretations of gender mainstreaming in different sectors -or policy domains-, services and among individuals (which she categorizes respectively as extensive, minimalist-reductive, defensive and conservative) that has allowed action, and that the ambiguity that was sustained over the concept has constituted a condition for consensus (2006:347).

Looking at what happened in different policy areas over time in the Commission, it seems more than likely that both Stratigaki and Jacquot have valid claims and that resistance and barriers to gender equality can be in place in one area while windows of opportunity open elsewhere. Such situation of combined opportunities and blockages in different areas can be explained by the earlier suggested co-existence of different local attitudes towards gender equality as a policy goal, in different departments in the European Commission.

The above theories on resistance and its roots point to a few important elements about which authors seem to agree, and to which I subscribe.

A first important observation deals with the actors: '*who is actually resisting?*' We see that individuals may have a significant role and impact in the total picture, both for blocking progress when they resist gender change (for example by not assuming their responsibilities in terms of gender mainstreaming) as for advancing progress (Roggeband and Verloo 2006; Stratigaki 2005; Braithwaite 2000). Roggeband and Verloo furthermore point out that this applies for staff at all levels of the organisation: both at senior levels and lower in the organisation.

The second point relates to the roots of resistance: '*where does resistance come from?*' Several authors (Rao and Kelleher, Mazey, Benschop and Verloo, Braithwaite) have linked resistance to the organisational culture, features, and embedded norms and values, and hence explain

resistance by an unwillingness to change these established features. These, as Rao and Kelleher (2005) point out, reflect the existing gendered power relations that are in place in the institution. These arguments confirm that it is useful to consider resistance in the light of the reigning 'deep structure' of the organisation.

Another, related, element to consider deals with the reasons for resistance: '*why is there resistance?*' Gender change exceeds the professional sphere, also affecting one's personal value set. Rather than that the transformative goal in itself is rejected, it may be that the sensitivity which is at play with those confronted with the requirement to implement gender mainstreaming is that the very transformation that is aimed at also affects the individual's own identity and thus exceeds the professional territory. A real commitment to gender equality inevitably implies a deconstruction and subsequent reconstruction of the own identity (the own 'self'), which is a realisation that is met with resistance. As a comparison, the practice of evaluations in a policy context can be used to illustrate that explicitly transformation-oriented practices do not necessarily have to confront structural resistance. In the case of policy practice evaluations, however, the scope of the evaluation and hence the possibly required transformation does not affect the identity of the involved policy actor, but remains in the 'safer' realms of the professional territory. So the specific problem or difficulty with gender transformation is that this is never 'neutral' to human actors.

Apart from the above explanation for resistance, I suggest that there might still be another element that can help explain resistance to gender change. When the political, transformative aim of gender mainstreaming is emphasised, this may evoke associations with (attempts to rebound with) feminist strategies. Such positioning of gender mainstreaming in a political context holds the risk of it being rejected as grounded in emotional and ideological convictions rather than on rational arguments and democratically achieved legal principles. This effect of 'overshooting the target' will be counter-productive for the gender mainstreaming endeavour. Paradoxically, it has been precisely with such concerns in mind that feminist thinkers have tactically moved away from the women's issues approach towards a broader gender relations approach (Woodward, 2004).

Furthermore, I believe it is useful to consider that resistance to gender change may be caused by a combination of factors, and that seeking a single causal relation is too simple. Considering that a set of mechanisms might be at play may help grasp the complexity of resistance. Looking at the implementation process of gender mainstreaming and the actors that are involved, different mental processes may influence the individuals' attitudes towards what is expected from them.

As stated above, in relation to the question '*what is resistance?*', gender theorists do not offer a concept for resistance that can be operationalised in research and neither do they seem to question whether manifestations that present themselves as forms of resistance are indeed expressions of hostility to the notion of gender change. Still, a variety of different forms of (apparent) resistance can be found in the literature: dilution, hijacking or shrinking of the

policy, pretending, delaying, non-action, inadequate action, sabotage, denial or trivialisation of the problem, marginalisation of gender equality actors. Together, existing scholarly literature rather seems to suggest a conspiracy theory against any attempt to change gender relations. Still, there are some suggestions that more 'reasonable' causes for resistance may be found. Benschop and Verloo have shown that fear of personal harm (in terms of professional image) can cause resistance, and Derbyshire points to the possibility that what appears as resistance might in fact be a lack of capacity on the part of the actors. It can however be argued that such lack of capacity (in terms of understanding, skills, or resources) on the part of staff is due to insufficient support for the gender mainstreaming effort on the part of the higher hierarchical levels in the organisation - and thus indeed an expression of resistance, albeit rooted elsewhere than where it manifests itself.

In my analysis, I will operationalise the resistance notion by making the distinction between incapacity, which is easier to identify, and 'real' resistance or hostility against the gender equality goal. While non-action or inadequate action by individuals might be an expression of their incapacity, the aggregate effect of such behaviour, if it is common, will have an incapacitating effect on the organisation as a whole. I argue that when such generalised, problematic non-action or inadequate action can be observed, this may be an indication of resistance at higher levels in the institution, where the policy decisions (notably on resources) are decided. This type of resistance is hardly traceable to individuals and can be labelled as institutional resistance, as it is a symptom of the institutional functioning whereby specific expertise – and notably that expertise which has normative connotations – is filtered away along the path to the top of the institution.

Thus, I argue that apparent implicit resistance at the level of an individual in an organisation which manifests itself as non-action or inadequate action can be caused by incapacity, due to a lack of resources (skills, time, supporting instruments or other) which can be detected by outsiders. When this effect occurs at a more general scale in the organisation, we can talk of implicit institutional resistance (aggregate non-action or inadequate action). However, there can also be resistance that is expressed explicitly: either discursively or in the practice. In the former case, it can be verified whether distance is taken from the goal of gender equality itself, while in the latter case actors explicitly and overtly do not do what they ought to in order to progress gender equality.

In summary, the existing literature that addresses resistance to gender change mainly deals with its forms or expressions, and somewhat – but less – with what causes it (its roots or origins) and who are the actors who display resistance. In practical works, manuals for example, and practitioners' accounts, possible solutions to resistance are also suggested. Where the causes of resistance are concerned, it seems important to distinguish between hostility against the notion of gender equality itself, stemming from an unwillingness to allow changes in the power balance between men and women, and other, apparently less 'fundamental' causes as there are

fear, uncertainty, ignorance, incapacity – which are more situated at the personal level but may in an aggregate form be very powerful. Making the distinction between the individual level and the institution when studying resistance is therefore important.

Somewhat surprisingly, the question of whether what appears as resistance is truly resistance or hostility to the notion of gender equality remains largely unaddressed in the existing literature. Also how (apparent) resistance relates to what kind of problems in the implementation of gender mainstreaming and how it affects the results of gender mainstreaming are unaddressed. It may be clear however that any form of resistance negatively affects the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming efforts, and thus deserves attention. When the causes of resistance are understood, they may be addressed and possibly even removed, increasing the potential of gender mainstreaming.

From the above, it might be clear that explaining manifestations of resistance in the context of a gender change project as a ‘naturally human’ reaction to any form of change, or as grounded in men’s opposition to attempts to alter gendered power relations are likely to be oversimplifications. It is therefore worthwhile to take a closer look at different signals of resistance in a given context and to situate these in their context. Operationalising these reflections, I will in my case analysis pinpoint apparent expressions of resistance on the part of the various actors involved in the gender mainstreaming implementation process and seek to identify what exactly their problem is, as well as how resistances relate to the outcomes of gender mainstreaming undertakings. In doing so, I will distinguish between implicit resistance and explicit resistance. Implicit resistance at the level of the individual is likely to be due to incapacity and can be verified by an outsider by looking at the availability or absence of the necessary resources (which may be knowledge, time, money, tools, or even power). The aggregate form of this effect leads then to implicit institutional resistance. Explicit resistance can be expressed discursively, in which case it can be verified whether a distancing from the goal of gender equality is noticeable, and in the practice. The latter occurs when actors (individuals or the institution) knowingly and overtly do not do what is required to contribute to gender equality.

2.6. Gender mainstreaming implementation by the European Commission: what this work will investigate

We have established that feminist political science scholars cannot explain why gender mainstreaming has not yielded the expected results, while they believed it is such powerful strategy. They agree there must be problems with the implementation of the strategy, but at the same time gender mainstreaming implementation remains largely understudied. Indeed, what exactly is/are the problem(s) and how the mechanisms work is unclear - the implementation stage of gender mainstreaming apparently being a ‘black box’ to scholars. As a consequence, many have embarked into speculations about possible causes for variable or unsatisfactory outcomes of gender mainstreaming. However, these theoretical notions about the causes are

very fragmented, unstructured, and based on rather loose empirical grounds. In short, not only does the theory not describe precisely enough what the problem is with gender mainstreaming implementation, it does not offer satisfactory explanations either. This situation calls for remediation, which the present research aims to contribute to. More specifically, this work will seek to deepen the understanding of why the reality of gender mainstreaming implementation does not live up to its (theoretical) promise, why the outcomes of gender mainstreaming are overall rather disappointing.

This understanding will be built through a case analysis of the European Commission's gender mainstreaming implementation in FP6. The existing literature about gender mainstreaming by the European Commission recognises variability in the understanding of the underlying goal of gender mainstreaming, in the uptake of the strategy, in the approach to it and in the adopted practices, translating in variability of the effectiveness of the strategy and thus in unevenness of gender mainstreaming results. We will therefore seek which manifestations of variability and unevenness can be found in the gender mainstreaming implementation process under FP6, making the distinction between two main phases in the policy process: on the one hand the planning (or design) of the implementation process, and on the other hand the implementation itself. Indeed, while the existing theories ignore the fact that there are stages in the process of gender mainstreaming, I argue that it is necessary to distinguish between the policy-making (i.e. the political decision-making process, up to the formal adoption of gender mainstreaming as a strategy) and the implementation stage, and within implementation between the planning of the implementation strategy and the actual implementation in terms of how it takes place in practice. Since the case analysis focuses on the gender mainstreaming implementation, I will distinguish the planning from the actual implementation. And for each instance where variability or unevenness is found, a closer look will be taken at what exactly the problem is. An answer to the following questions can then be sought: where in the process is the problem situated, in relation to the role of which actor(s) does variability or unevenness occur, are there specific gender mainstreaming or other process-related instruments involved, which resources were needed and were these in place. This approach will allow to unveil the mechanisms that have been at work and to identify how the results have been affected.

The theoretical framework for this research has been constructed through combining work from different schools of feminist thinking. A new school of thinking about institutions and how they deliver gender equality policies, namely feminist institutionalism, appears promising and deserves more attention. Feminist institutionalist scholars aim to investigate how institutional aspects relate to the potential and outcomes of the gender equality endeavours of these very institutions (Chappell, 2006, 2010; Mackay & Meier, 2003; Mackay & Waylen, 2009; Wieringa, 1994). While this young strand of thinking cannot yet lean on a substantive body of literature, the theorists that adhere to it recognise that there are significant pieces of knowledge in existing works of feminist scholars (who do not necessarily categorise themselves

as feminist institutionalists) that can support feminist institutionalist theory. For this reason, I have selected from existing scholarly works the most promising elements that may help to explain why gender mainstreaming does not deliver the expected results. The issues that were retained deal with (potentially problematic) conceptualisations of gender mainstreaming and gender equality, key conditions for effective gender mainstreaming and resistances. These will hence be analysed in detail in this research.

Following the feminist institutionalist reasoning, I have reviewed existing discussions about the European Commission, how its features may affect its gender mainstreaming endeavours and what the role of agency can be within this setting. Based upon this theoretical analysis, I have established that academic literature about the European Commission indeed contains suggestions that its institutional features influence its performance in terms of gender equality policy implementation. Notably its general weakness in policy implementation, absence of specialist knowledge, absence of hard incentives, compartmentalisation of power and heterogeneity among leaders are pointed out as undermining the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming. Based upon the review of the literature, it appears that the institutional nature of the European Commission can be characterised as a liquid, compartmentalised bureaucracy in which different attitudes towards gender equality co-exist. From this conclusion, a number of research questions can be derived. Does the case indeed confirm this characterisation? If so (following feminist institutionalist thinking), to what extent have the institutional features impacted upon the gender mainstreaming implementation? What is or can be the role of individuals within such setting?

Let us now turn to what has been withheld from the review of feminist scholarly work in relation to shortcoming gender mainstreaming and how these issues will be addressed in the case analysis.

A first issue deals with the conceptualisation of the gender equality goal. Feminist scholars argue that when the goal is not clearly conceptualised in the policy definition stage, it can be expected that this will lead to problems during implementation. We will therefore verify how the goal of gender mainstreaming was conceptualised in the case under review: by checking first of all whether a policy-specific goal of gender equality to be pursued by the gender mainstreaming strategy had been defined, whether this goal was clearly communicated towards all the actors that would be involved in the implementation stage in order for them to know what they were expected to work towards, and not unimportantly whether the goal was also understood by the respective actors. Furthermore, the analysis will unravel how the implementation of gender mainstreaming contributed to the realisation of the policy goal, how this evolved in the process, what the influence of institutional elements was on such involvement and what the effects were on the outcomes of gender mainstreaming. Then, on a more theoretical level, I will also assess how the policy goal as it has been put forward in my case relates to the theories

that address the different strategies towards gender equality. As theorists put forward 'agenda-setting' policy definition as holding most potential for transformative outcomes, I will verify to what extent the policy definition in my case can be considered as agenda-setting and establish what this meant for the outcomes.

A second important issue deals with the conditions for gender mainstreaming. Based upon the existing literature and against the backdrop of an institutional approach to explaining shortcoming gender mainstreaming implementation, I have established four key conditions for effective mainstreaming. These are:

- The willingness of the institution to question and effectively address its own structures and culture: the deeply rooted structures of power, gender hierarchies, values and frames that exist within it;
- Tackling gender mainstreaming implementation as a staged process, departing from a thorough analysis and questioning of the existing situation, upon which the definition and planning of actions can be based, structural provisions put in place, all actors fully equipped (with tools and resources), which then can be followed by a duly monitored and evaluated implementation;
- Consultation with and involvement of civil society and/or experts during the policy process;
- Accountability structures and systems, or 'hard incentives': holding people responsible for the actions undertaken and their results.

In this research, I will examine to what extent the various conditions were fulfilled, how this affected the implementation of gender mainstreaming (if at all), and how the characterisation of the institution as a liquid, compartmentalised bureaucracy in which different attitudes towards gender equality co-exist can help explain what happened. Considering how the European Commission is conceptualised (above), it can be expected that we will find at least the fourth condition (accountability structures) unfulfilled in this institution.

Thirdly, both theoretical scholarly work and grey literature touch upon the issue of resistance to gender equality and / or that gender mainstreaming is faced with. This resistance argument is nevertheless hardly developed or critically examined, as set out above in section 2.4.: causes of resistance are hardly analysed, no distinction is made between resistance rooted in hostility to gender equality or caused by other concerns.

In the present work, I will seek to distinguish between different types of resistance, notably resistance against the goal of gender equality on the one hand and incapacity on the part of the actors who are expected to implement gender mainstreaming tasks on the other hand. I argue that such incapacity may lead to non-action or inadequate action – which can be read as resistance to gender mainstreaming. Where such non-action or inadequate action, due to incapacity, manifests itself on a large scale, I believe there is reason to suspect resistance to gender equality at higher hierarchical levels in the organisation which takes the form of

insufficient resources being made available so that actors could act upon their duties. Such case, where it occurs, can then be labelled as institutional resistance and reveals the organisation's unwillingness to question and change its own 'deep' culture (the values and norms that are embedded within the organisation and that underpin its functioning).

From the theoretical framework developed above, the following expectations can be formulated when gender mainstreaming implementation does not yield the expected outcomes:

- When the goal is insufficiently clear to the actors who have to take up tasks in the gender mainstreaming implementation - either because the goal is not clearly conceptualised, or insufficiently clearly communicated or not well understood – then gender mainstreaming will not be as effective as it could have been.
- An organisation that does not address those obstacles to gender mainstreaming that can be found within its own boundaries (its own 'deep' culture, its own processes and features) cannot effectively implement gender mainstreaming.
- If stages in the gender mainstreaming implementation process are overlooked or inadequately addressed, this will negatively affect the outcomes of the process.
- Consultation with or involvement of civil society organisations or gender experts allow for critical review and input in the process and serves as a form of accountability structure for the institution. Where such provision is absent, the institution is less likely to follow the most effective path towards progressing gender equality.
- In a liquid bureaucracy, marked by a high level of staff mobility, it is hardly possible to adequately equip the actors with sufficient knowledge as specialist knowledge cannot be kept in place and neither can civil servants be held responsible for the eventual outcomes of a policy which their predecessors have been in charge of, which stands in the way of proper accountability structures.
- Apparent manifestations of resistance that can be observed in the process of gender mainstreaming implementation are not necessarily signals of hostility against gender equality itself, but can be signs of incapacity on the part of the actors.
- Where incapacity of actors occurs on a more general scale, this is a likely indicator of institutional resistance to gender change.
- In loci where the highest ranked officials show favourable attitudes towards gender equality as a policy goal, real opportunities exist for individual actors to push forward progress towards gender equality.

I will now set out how I propose to operationalise the above theoretical concepts. As set out above, since variability and unevenness (as defined in section 2.1.) are recognised in the implementation of gender mainstreaming, these occurrences are good starting points for the analysis. The analysis approach for the case material will subsequently centre on the conceptualisation of the goals of gender equality, the extent to which the key conditions for effective gender mainstreaming have been fulfilled, whether and how resistance has affected

the implementation and results of the gender mainstreaming implementation and, last but not least, how institutional elements have affected the gender mainstreaming implementation process.

When comparisons are made (for example between actors) in terms of available resources, performances or results of actions and when differences can be noted, the respective available resources, performances or results can be labelled as variable. However, for those occasions when these differences should not have existed, one can say that there is unevenness (of availability of resources, performance or results). Labelling something as uneven therefore always holds a quality assessment.

Operationalising the 'deep culture' of an organisation as a concept is not easy since it seeks to grasp those aspects of the reality of an organisation that are covert, embedded and underpinning the more formal and apparent features that characterise it: the pre-assumptions that exist about masculinity and femininity, women's and men's roles, the reigning implicit values. It is therefore hardly possible to objectively substantiate the 'deep structure' in a certain locus of an organisation. In the absence of public and objective information, indirect evidence has to be looked for. As already suggested in section 2.4., it can be assumed that when the attitudes towards gender change are favourable, the organisation should be willing to question its own features, to effectively address those elements that stand in the way for effective gender mainstreaming, and more generally to do what is necessary to render its gender mainstreaming undertakings effective. Indirect evidence can thus be found in the visible actions that are initiated or undertaken by the organisation or certain units, departments or individuals in it. More specifically, the explicit support (or absence thereof) of those in hierarchical positions, visible in the form of clear actions (rather than in words or documents), will be regarded as the most important signals of favourable (or unfavourable) attitudes towards gender change. Indeed, as Hooghe (2001) has shown that those in power positions in the EC can mould the reigning norms and values in their own units or departments and set their own standards, their openness (respectively closedness) to gender equality considerations will determine the chances of advancing gender equality in their department during their term in that power position. This interpretation confirms a condition for effective gender mainstreaming that has often been repeated by practitioners: that the support from the highest hierarchical positions is crucial for the success of gender equality undertakings by an organisation. Conversely, where there are clear signs of the opposite (when obstacles are not removed, when the conditions for effective gender mainstreaming are not fulfilled), this observation can point to unfavourable internalised norms and values that strive to maintain gender inequalities. In other words, resistance to gender equality is likely to be found in loci with an unfavourable attitude towards gender change. Throughout this work, I will pay attention to indicators of favourable or unfavourable attitudes towards gender change in different loci or at different points in time within the DG RTD and seek to demonstrate how these have affected the implementation of

gender mainstreaming. I will also undertake to establish the interplay between the various local attitudes towards gender change, and the potential determining role of individual actors or agency.

How the policy and context-specific goal of the whole gender mainstreaming undertaking by the European Commission in its Sixth RTD Framework Programme was conceptualised in the policy definition stage can be verified by checking the legal text establishing FP6 (as quoted above in section 1.4.): women's participation in research was to be increased on the one hand, and gender equality was to be considered in the research itself on the other hand. The latter objective was to be realised through 'mainstream' research as well as through research focussing specifically on gender issues. It can thus be concluded that a dual goal had been formalised, even if in some Commission documents the goal is described as 'three-fold' (research 'with', 'for' and 'about' women) - a conceptualisation which was adopted under FP5 but later was criticised as focussing too much on 'women' rather than on the fact that both genders would benefit from improved attention to gender issues in science. In this work, I will investigate whether this dual goal was clearly communicated to all actors who were to take up tasks in FP6, for them to know what they were expected to contribute to. I will do so in the first empirical chapter (Chapter 3) by a review of all the relevant official documents.

In the next chapters, I will analyse how and to what extent the different actors have actually implemented their respective gender-related tasks. By doing so, I will verify how the implementation phase contributed to the realisation of both of the objectives and whether both objectives were clearly understood by the actors. By considering all actors and the whole cycle of the Framework Programme, I will establish whether there has been a variable (between actors) or an evolving (in time) understanding of the goal of gender mainstreaming in the implementation process, as well as how this affected the eventual outcomes.

The first of the conditions that I put forward for effective gender mainstreaming is the willingness of the organisation to question and, where necessary, address its own 'deep' culture and its own organisational features. To operationalise the question whether this condition was fulfilled in the case, we must establish which obstacles to effective gender mainstreaming can be attributed to organisation-specific aspects of the European Commission and whether or not efforts have been undertaken by the Commission to remove or overcome those obstacles. Persistence of the respective problems is then a sign of lacking or inadequate action on the part of the institution, which can be read as unwillingness to actually address the institutional aspects. Relevant problems in the European Commission that were already pointed out are: absence of specialist knowledge, absence of hard incentives, compartmentalisation of power and heterogeneity among leaders, and a high degree of staff mobility. I will check how these elements have affected the gender mainstreaming implementation in the case and what the European Commission has undertaken to counter any negative effects of these elements. While attention is paid throughout the case analysis to each of these institution-related impediments

to gender mainstreaming implementation, it is particularly Chapter 7 (which addresses the dynamics of the institutional context of the case) that will shed light on this issue of the willingness of the organisation to question and address its own 'deep' culture and features.

The second condition says that gender mainstreaming implementation should be addressed as a staged process. The different stages that I suggest should each be considered are: an analysis and critical review of the existing situation, the definition and planning of necessary actions (to remedy identified problems and to promote gender equality), the putting in place of structural provisions (these can be structures, processes and/or procedures), the equipment of all actors with the necessary tools and resources (notably awareness, knowledge, skills and time), then followed by the actual implementation (the 'roll-out' of the actions), which is duly monitored and evaluated (so that shortcomings, bottlenecks or problems are identified and to enable improvements). More broadly, I argue it is indispensable to distinguish the planning stage (comprising all preparatory actions) from the actual implementation stage (or 'roll-out') within the gender mainstreaming implementation process.

In my analysis, I will check whether these different stages have indeed been addressed. That the planning of FP6 was preceded by an analysis and state-of-play studies has been described in 1.4. above. In Chapter 3, I will investigate which provisions and measures were put in place by considering the various actors that would be involved in the implementation of FP6. The analysis of the actual implementation (discussed in Chapters 4, 5 and 6) will complement our insights because this analysis will allow checking whether each of the actors had indeed been adequately and fully equipped. That so-called 'gender monitoring studies' were launched under FP6, has been mentioned before. However, whether the results of these have fed the process with a view to improving it will become clear by taking a close look at the institutional context in which the case was set, which I do in Chapter 7.

The involvement of civil society actors and / or experts in the process of the gender mainstreaming implementation, the third condition that I propose, allows for critical and competent voices to feed into the process. Openings for such interventions can in a way be regarded as a form of institutional accountability towards relevant external stakeholders and can help to detect shortcomings as well as to identify ways to improve the process. In my analysis, I will not only address whether and how the formal planning and provisions put in place for the implementation of FP6 had foreseen openings for civil society actors and experts (like for example scholars from gender studies departments or gender consultants) to be involved or to feed into the process, I will also verify to what extent these actors' views and voices have also found their way into the system and were taken into account. This will mainly appear from Chapter 7.

The fourth condition poses that accountability structures and mechanisms are necessary to ensure that the actors also implement the actions foreseen for them. The reasoning behind this

condition is that only by holding people responsible for what they do (or omit to do) and for how they do it, effective gender mainstreaming implementation can be ensured. The existence of stimuli and sanctions are important driving forces for enabling change. Notably considering that gender equality is enshrined in the EU Treaty and that the European Commission is the funding authority in the case of the RTD Framework Programmes, I argue it is absolutely legitimate to impose upon all the actors respect for gender equality, in line with the provisions foreseen for this purpose.

In Chapter 3, I will verify whether and, if any, which formal provisions for enabling accountability for the implementation of gender mainstreaming had been foreseen in FP6. The subsequent Chapters 4, 5 and 6 will then make visible to what extent and through which mechanisms (the absence of) such provisions have affected the actual implementation and results of gender mainstreaming in the reviewed case. In Chapter 7, finally, I will examine how the institutional context affects to the organisational capacity to put in place effective accountability structures and mechanisms.

With the present research, I also undertake to investigate what actually constitutes ‘resistance’ and how resistance affects the implementation of gender mainstreaming. I suggest retaining as ‘real’ resistance only those acts of resistance that are rooted in a rejection of the goal of the strategy, namely gender equality itself.

Operationalising the resistance theme, I intend to be alert for any ‘signals’ of resistance throughout the analysis and, where they are recognised, to find out how these are to be interpreted. I will thus identify by whom and at which points in the gender mainstreaming implementation process (apparent) resistance is expressed and will try to explain its grounds.

As overarching objective, the present work undertakes to examine what has prevented the implementation of gender mainstreaming to be more effective than it actually has been under FP6. The operationalisation of this research objective is done through answering two main questions: what is the extent to which an implementation problem occurred, and how can variability and unevenness be explained. These translate into the following specific research questions.

In relation to the first main question:

1. Where and when in the process can variability and unevenness be identified?

And in search of explanations for variability and unevenness:

2. How was the gender equality goal conceptualised by the EC in FP6, and have there been any misunderstandings among actors about this goal?
3. Are there any instances in which the deeply rooted values and structures have been mentioned and addressed?
4. Has gender mainstreaming been addressed as a staged process?
5. Did the planning of the gender mainstreaming implementation consider all actors and more specifically, did it provide them with the necessary resources?

6. Has there been consultation with or involvement of civil society organisations or gender experts during the implementation process?
7. Were there accountability structures or hard incentives in place?
8. Which manifestations of resistance can be identified and how can they be explained?
9. How have the institutional aspects (structures and culture) of the EC, and more particularly the co-existence of different attitudes towards gender equality as a policy goal within the institution, affected the process?
10. What has been the role and space for individual actors to make a difference?

The case under review comprises within the European Commission's Sixth Framework Programme for Research and Development (FP6) the scientific parts covering the Social Sciences and Humanities as well as the so-called 'Science in Society' field. These parts have been analysed in depth. The analysis looks respectively at the structures that were put in place within the Framework Programme to support gender mainstreaming, or in other words the 'planning' of the implementation and possible shortcomings in it (Chapter 3); at the extent to which the dual goal was realised: increasing women's participation (Chapter 4) and rendering the research work itself gender-sensitive (Chapter 5). The Gender Action Plan, as an instrument specifically developed to enable the integration of gender issues in research work under FP6 is critically examined in Chapter 6. A last empirical chapter (Chapter 7) looks into the institutional context and how this evolved, which helps to explain gender mainstreaming outcomes notably in the light of the institutional features.

3. Structural provisions and measures for implementing gender mainstreaming in the 6th Framework Programme

The present chapter looks into the design and planning of the gender mainstreaming implementation and aims to verify whether all actors have been duly considered in this phase. More specifically, it will check whether the different actors were properly equipped for their task by verifying which provisions and measures had been foreseen and put in place when FP6 was conceived, so as to allow an effective realisation of the gender mainstreaming goals. The structure that is followed in this chapter is to look, for each of the actors involved in the implementation process of the 'Science and Society' and Priority 7 (Social Sciences and Humanities) areas of FP6, what was formally put in place for them. This assessment will help to clarify whether the actors were capable (in terms of skills, resources, instruments) to take up their task, which in turn can explain why actors have (or not) adequately dealt with gender in their contribution to FP6.

The chapter also includes a discussion of the actual implementation of those provisions that do not directly relate to the implementation of projects (during proposal evaluation and relating to support services provided by National Contact Points).

By a comparative analysis of the equipment of the actors, this chapter will specifically allow to answer the first research question that aims at detecting variability and unevenness, as well as the fifth research question that relates to the consideration of the different actors during the planning of the gender mainstreaming implementation. This chapter will also pay attention to how the gender equality goal was communicated by the EC in FP6 towards the different actors involved, as well as to how actors at the Framework Programme level seem to have understood the goal, contributing to formulating an answer to the second research question.

3.1. Method and data

For answering these questions, a comprehensive documentary review has been undertaken, whereby the most relevant official and formal documents that served as basis and input for the work of the different actors have been critically reviewed to verify where and how references to gender have been made in these documents. Additionally, for some actors, the documentary review has been complemented with additional enquiries and analyses, notably to check the implementation of certain provisions at the framework programme level (as opposed to the project level).

As a reminder: the case analysis looks in detail at two specific areas of the Sixth RTD Framework Programme (FP6): the area that deals with the Social Sciences and Humanities, and the so-called 'Science and Society' area. These areas were chosen because they are the most relevant

areas for gender. It may be useful to situate these areas first within the broader structure of FP6. FP6 had three main blocks of activities, in which the first block 'Integrating and Strengthening the European Research Area' contains seven Priority Thematic Areas. '*Citizens and governance in a knowledge-based society*' (covering the Social Sciences and Humanities) is the 7th Priority of these thematic areas. '*Science and Society*' is an activity area within the second block of FP6 'Structuring the European Research Area' (ERA). The '*Science and Society*' activity area is structured along three axes, of which the first aims to bring research closer to society; the second is concerned with promoting responsible research and application of science and technology, while the third seeks to step up the science/society dialogue, and addresses also the role of women in science. Despite this specific focus on women in science within Science and Society, it is to be noted that both fields (Priority 7 and Science and Society), due to their very nature, are intrinsically gender relevant because dealing with society and its (mixed) population.

The actors that were involved in the selected areas of the Sixth framework Programme, and that are therefore subsequently considered in the sections below are: the applicants / project holders, the proposal evaluators, the independent observers, negotiators / project officers, Descartes Prize evaluators and juries, National Contact Points and Civil Society Organisations or external gender experts²⁰. First an overview is given now of the corpus of data reviewed per set of actors. The reviewed documents comprise all the important documents that were relevant for the respective actors.

The documents that were reviewed for the *applicants / project holders* are the Work Programmes, the calls for proposals, the Guide for Proposers, the Compendium of Good Practices for Gender Actions Plans, the contract, and the Science and Society reporting requirements.

For the *proposal evaluators*, the reviewed documents are the Guidelines on Proposal Evaluation and Selection Procedures, the Guide for Evaluators, as well as a slide show prepared by the Women and Science unit for the purpose of supporting the briefing of evaluators on gender issues. To gain an understanding of the implementation of the provisions by the evaluators, all the Evaluation Summary Reports of the proposals evaluated above all thresholds and of the gender-specific proposals that failed were reviewed. The latter were analysed in order to check whether any bias could have existed during the evaluation process against these gender-specific proposals.

The Guidelines on Proposal Evaluation and Selection Procedures are also the source for the *independent observers'* role. These Guidelines contain an annex entitled Code of Conduct for independent observers. In addition, an unofficial model for a report to be produced by the independent observers was looked into. Those independent observer reports produced by these actors that could be obtained were also reviewed in order to check how the independent

²⁰ Absent from this analysis are the project evaluators of the biggest projects (Networks of Excellence and Integrated Projects), as I have not found references to these actors in the framework programme documents that were reviewed.

observers have taken up the implementation of their gender mainstreaming related responsibilities.

For the *Commission officials* who act as negotiators and as project scientific officers, the main guidance document for the implementation of the gender mainstreaming approach under FP6 has been the Vademecum (the full title of this document is Vademecum: Gender Mainstreaming in the 6th Framework Programme – Reference Guide for Scientific Officers/Project Officers). The present chapter also looks into other structural provisions and resources available to these actors: the template of the Science and Society Reporting Questionnaire which project holders had to submit into SESAM (the electronic reporting system of the EC under the Framework Programme) and which was supposed to support central monitoring of projects' progress related to gender (among other issues), as well as the time these Commission officials have had available for taking up their project officer tasks.

For the *evaluators and juries* who made the selection of the Descartes Prize winners, the 'Guidance Notes for Evaluators' for the Descartes Prizes has been reviewed. This chapter also turns briefly to the implementation of the Descartes Prizes initiative by the Commission, by looking at the number of women in the selection panels and among the Prize winners.

The approach followed for the analysis of the structural provisions to equip the *National Contact Points* (NCPs) for their gender mainstreaming role has been different. A central survey among all FP6 NCPs has been organised by the EC on their perceived needs and role in the gender mainstreaming process. The present chapter uses the results of this survey as the basis of the analysis.

Finally, this chapter also considers the provisions that have been structurally foreseen for the involvement of *external gender experts* in the gender mainstreaming implementation, while recognising that no provisions had been put in place for the involvement of traditional women's movement organisations.

Besides the analysis itself, the sections below give more detailed information about how the documents have been analysed.

3.2. Applicants / project holders

The documents that are important to sort out the conditions for applicants and the incentives to make them take gender into account are the Work Programmes, the calls for proposals, the Guide for Proposers, the Compendium of Good Practices for Gender Action Plans, the contract, and the Science and Society reporting requirements. These are the documents that will be reviewed in this section, for both scientific domains that I examine in this case: the 'Social Sciences and Humanities' and 'Science and Society'. As gender equality as a policy goal for FP6 had been formalised in its legal base, we will verify whether and how the documents that served the implementation of the framework programme supported the realisation of this policy goal.

Work Programme

The work programme of each activity area is the key reference document for (potential) project applicants, indicating the eligible research areas and guiding the conception and design of projects. It lays out the objectives, structure and overall approach followed for this activity area; demarcates the eligible research topics; presents the implementation plan for the activity area and gives the information for the individual calls planned under the activity area, including the evaluation criteria that will be used for the evaluation of proposals.

A review of the work programmes of both ‘Social Sciences and Humanities’ (SSH, entitled ‘Citizens and governance in a knowledge-based society’ and commonly labelled as ‘Priority 7’ in FP6) and of ‘Science and Society’ indicates that in both areas gender is explicitly put forward, and more so in ‘Science and Society’ than in Priority 7 because the former comprises as one of its main axes the ‘role of women in science’.

The work programme of the thematic area entitled ‘Citizens and governance in a knowledge-based society’ (Priority 7), in the chapter devoted to the ‘objectives, structure and approach’ for Priority 7 contains no reference to the gender dimension in the work programme, despite the fact that it aims at mobilising Europe’s full research capacity ‘in all its diversity’. The main objective of this thematic area reads as follows: *“to mobilise in a coherent effort, in all their wealth and diversity, European research capacities in economic, political, social sciences and humanities that are necessary to develop an understanding of, and to address issues related to, the emergence of the knowledge-based society and new forms of relationships between its citizens, on one hand, and between its citizens and institutions, on the other.”*²¹

The technical descriptions of the eight research areas and their research topics eligible for funding, however, do contain references to the gender dimension. Eight different research topics (notably 2.1.1, 2.2.1, 2.2.2, 2.2.3, 3.2.1, 4.1.1, 6.1.1, 6.2.2, 6.2.3, and 7.2.1) include such references. More specifically, the work programme asks to include in the analyses ‘gender aspects’, ‘gender perspectives’ and ‘gender roles’, or also ‘gendered approaches’ to the subject of the research (e.g. democracy). Topic 7.1.2 explicitly addresses gender as a research topic: ‘Gender and citizenship in a multi-cultural context’.

Annex 1 of the Priority 7 work programme contains a ‘General Introduction to the Work Programme of the Specific Programme “Integrating and strengthening the European Research Area”’. It explains the horizontal issues of concern²², among which gender equality: *“This work programme attempts, where possible, to reinforce and increase the place and role of women in science and research both from the perspective of equal opportunities and gender relevance of the topics covered.”*

²¹ FP6 Specific Programme “Integrating and Strengthening the European Research Area”. Priority 7 : Citizens and Governance in a knowledge-based society. Work Programme 2004-2006. p.2.

²² These horizontal issues of concern are ethics, education, public outreach and dialogue, communication and gender.

The work programme also sets out the evaluation criteria against which the proposals are assessed. These include the horizontal issues, although these are not marked. The work programmes says: *“the following issues are also addressed for all proposals at any appropriate moment in the evaluation: Are there gender issues associated with the subject of the proposal? If so, have they been adequately taken into account?”*

Only for the evaluation of Networks of Excellence²³ one of the marked criteria ‘organisation and management’ contains the specific probe on whether there is a well-considered plan for promoting gender equality in the network.

The work programme of ‘Science and Society’ states that the selection of the activities it contains was done with the help of the Advisory Group for Science and Society and the Helsinki Group on Women and Science, which brings together national civil servants and/or gender experts from the EU Member States and the countries associated with the FP, involved in promoting women in scientific research at national level.

Among the activities to be supported it lists ‘gender research,’ i.a. comparative assessments, methodological development (including design of indicators), surveys, impact assessments, studies.

In the technical descriptions of which topics can be supported under Science and Society, the Parts A and B (referring to the first two axes mentioned above) make no reference to gender issues. Nevertheless, the objectives of these parts contain general references to ‘civil society’ (topic 4.3.1), or in relation to ethics: ‘diverse cultural backgrounds across the continent’ or ‘the fundamental ethical principles applied in the European countries’ (topic 4.3.2) without explicitly stimulating (the investigation of) the involvement of the full diversity of societal actors, including women.

Part C contains the task ‘woman and science’ (reference 4.3.5), of which the objective is formulated as follows: *“to boost gender equality in research, through stimulating the participation of women in science and technological development; and fostering the integration of the gender dimension throughout European research.”*²⁴ It specifies that ‘Women and science’ is to be understood in the broadest sense, ranging from natural to social science - including, but not restricted to, science, engineering and technology (SET) – and is of relevance to women scientists and researchers in both the public and private sectors.

²³ ‘Networks of Excellence’ are one of the so-called instruments (or formats) for projects available under FP6. Together with the ‘Integrated Projects’ they constitute the biggest projects in terms of budget and size of consortia.

²⁴ Work Programme: 2005-6 ‘Science and Society’, p. 13.

This task consists of three different topics:

- Topic 4.3.5.1 deals with ‘Stimulating the policy debate at national and regional level and mobilisation of women scientists’, focussing on:
 - supporting the empowerment of women scientists and engineers and promoting public debate;
 - promoting the participation of women in science decision-making and policy definition. The aim is to stimulate mechanisms for involving women scientists more actively in research management and policy definition at national and European levels;
 - Mobilising more women for studies and careers in science, engineering and technology (SET).
- Topic 4.3.5.2 deals with ‘Developing a better understanding of the gender issue in scientific research’, and focuses on:
 - benchmarking of policy measures for gender equality in science;
 - minimising gender bias in the measurement and evaluation of scientific excellence;
 - deepening and broadening the quantitative knowledge base on women and science in Europe.
- Topic 4.3.5.3 deals with ‘Promoting the enhancement of the Gender Watch System and associated activities to promote gender equality throughout the European Research Area’, and focuses on:
 - practical tools for mainstreaming and monitoring gender equality;
 - mainstreaming the gender dimension in new or emerging strategic research areas.

Apart from a few studies which follow the public procurement procedures, all these topics were to be covered through research projects for which proposals could be submitted in answer to two calls ‘Women and Science’ (FP6-2004-Science-and-society-10 and FP6-2004-Science-and-society-17).

Under reference 4.3.4 of Part C ‘Scientific and technological culture, young people, science education and careers’, the only reference to ‘gender’ is made under topic 4.3.4.3, for actions aimed at understanding and comparing the strengths and weaknesses of school science teaching practice and methodologies (taking into account gender specific actions).

The other topics under this heading do not include references to a gender dimension, although these are relevant, e.g. for actions to increase ‘public awareness’ of S&T advances and their societal impacts; to increase dialogue between ‘citizens’ and the scientific community; to facilitate communication between ‘civil society’ and scientific research institutions; to improve communication between the scientific community and ‘the public’ on issues of European research, etc. The text does not contain any explicit recommendation to address the full scope of (sub-)groups within this ‘public’ to ensure the integration of the gender dimension.

Also under Part C is the task ‘Horizontal Actions’ (reference 4.3.6), with as first topic ‘Promoting

the 'embedding' of science and society issues across the Framework Programme', aiming at inventorying the actions undertaken within the thematic priorities in FP6 to streamline the horizontal objectives of the Framework Programme, among which gender equality. This study would follow the public procurement procedures.

Calls for proposals, Guide for Proposers; Gender Action Plans - Compendium of Good Practices

The Guide for Proposers is the main document containing the instructions to proposers on how their proposal should be presented and how the Proposal Form should be completed. These Guides were reviewed in order to verify whether the proposers were given guidance as to what was expected from them as regards gender issues, both in terms of their research and the team, as in terms of how this should be presented in the proposal.

The different Guides for Proposers all contain, as an annex, the one-page document 'Integrating the gender dimension in FP6 projects' which presents the threefold relationship between women and research, and explains the reasoning behind the gender equality concerns in FP6 as follows: *"Promoting women does not mean treating them in the same way as men. Men's characteristics, situations and needs are often taken as the norm, and –to have the same opportunities- women are expected to behave like them. Ensuring gender equality means giving equal consideration to the life patterns, needs and interests of both women and men. Gender mainstreaming thus includes also changing the working culture."*

It also provides a list of examples of how gender difference or gender-specific needs can be relevant for research. For Integrated Projects (IP) and Networks of Excellence (NoE), the two new instruments under the FP6, this document explains also what is expected from the applicants as regards a Gender Action Plan they have to include in their proposal.

Furthermore, the Guides for Proposers explicitly mention as example under consortium management activities the *'overseeing the promotion of gender equality in the project'*.

The language used in the Guides for Proposers is gender-neutral. The reader is addressed directly, using the second person form ('you', 'your') and thus avoiding systematically mentioning 'he / she' or 'his / her'. However, such terms are sometimes used when reference is made to the project co-ordinator.

For Priority 7, the Guide for Proposers contains a section 'Key recommendations for submitting a proposal to priority 7', which draws the attention i.a. to the importance of gender issues. It instructs proposers to clearly indicate the way in which these issues are taken into account and states that "the gender dimension is of particular relevance to the research topics addressed in Priority 7".

Section B.10 of the proposal form is devoted to gender issues, and proposers are instructed to include in this section their Gender Action Plan (for the Integrated Projects and Networks

of Excellence only), and to point out how they take into account gender issues associated with their research, if any. This is phrased as follows in the Guide: *“If there are gender issues associated with the subject of the proposal, show they have been adequately taken into account”*. This seems to imply that gender issues are not related to the other elements of the research project to be proposed: relevance to the objectives of Priority 7 (section B.2), potential impact (section B.3), the consortium (B.5) and project resources (B.7). Furthermore, by the way in which this instruction is phrased (*‘If...’*) the intrinsic gender relevance for these areas is not recognised.

For Science and Society, in the Proposal Form²⁵, gender issues are only suggested to be covered under the last section B.7 ‘Other issues’, phrased as follows: *“If there are ethical or gender issues associated with the subject of the proposal, show they have been adequately taken into account”*. This seems to imply that gender issues are not related to the other elements of the research project to be proposed: relevance to the objectives of Science and Society (section B.2), potential impact (section B.3), the consortium and project resources (B.4). And also for the Science and Society programme, the way in which this instruction for section B.7 is phrased, seems to ignore that there are per definition gender issues associated with the research as all topics in this area deal with society and its (male and female) population.

For the *Descartes Prizes*, the Guide for Proposers contains the instruction to proposers to clearly indicate in their proposal how gender issues are taken into account.

The calls for proposals contain a standard statement, which has the purpose to encourage women to participate in FP6: *“The European Community has adopted an equal opportunities policy and, on this basis, women are particularly encouraged to either submit proposals for indirect RTD actions or participate in the submission of proposals for indirect RTD actions.”*

The Women and Science unit in the DG Research published in December 2005 a document entitled *Gender Action Plans – A compendium of good practices* (European Commission, 2005b), to provide guidance for applicants on how to design a Gender Action Plan (GAP). This document does not present a definition of gender equality, but sets out in its introduction that: *“the European Commission considers that without gender equality in science and without a better use of the human resources available, scientific excellence will never be truly achieved within the European Research Area. This is why it has developed a gender equality policy based on at least two combined objectives:*

- *Promoting the participation of women scientists in Framework Programme activities;*
- *Ensuring that the gender dimension is properly addressed in EU-funded research content.”*

It thus presents the two-fold approach as a strategy towards gender equality rather than as a definition of gender equality itself.

²⁵ This is the template on the basis of which proposers have to structure and complete their proposal, and which is explained in the Guide for Proposers.

The Compendium further indicates the elements that a 'good' GAP should contain: a diagnosis of the current situation regarding gender in the project (women's participation and gender aspects in the research) and practical proposed actions, pointing out that *"the starting point does not matter but rather the progress intended to be made"* (p. 3).

Clarifying what is meant with the 'gender aspects of research', the Compendium states: "Integrating the gender dimension in research means questioning systematically whether, and in what sense, sex and gender are relevant in projects objectives and methodology. Many science and research projects include humans as subjects. Because gender differences are fundamental organising features of life and society, recognising these differences has important implications in scientific knowledge." (p. 4). This is followed by a list of examples of gender relevant research topics, and nine cases of real GAPs as they were included in submitted proposals for different FP6 Thematic Priorities.

Although the Compendium does constitute a clearer guide for the applicants on what exactly the Commission expects from them with the GAP than what was available before, the Commission does not mention underlying mechanisms or structural (power) imbalances explaining existing inequalities, and thus ignores the 'political' dimension of the problem, namely the existing gender inequality in science.

The contract

There is no mention of gender in the core model contract which project holders sign with the European Commission. Reference to gender is however made in annexes II and III of the contract:

Annex II: (Page 3, point II.3) under the performance obligations is stated: "The contractor shall: endeavour to promote equal opportunities between men and women in the implementation of the project."

Annex III: for integrated project and networks of excellence, III. 1 states the obligation to provide an action plan for the promotion of gender equality:

"In addition to the provisions of Article II.X (reporting) and in accordance with its provisions, the following report is obligatory:

- An action plan for the promotion of gender equality within the project, in a format which can be distributed to the public, shall be submitted.
- The initial plan, which is part of the joint programme of activity should be updated with each detailed joint programme of activity and a report on progress achieved under the plan must be submitted at the latest with the final scientific report required by the contract."

Science and Society reporting

All FP6 project holders (coordinators) were expected to complete an online questionnaire about the 'Science and Society' issues in their project. This 'Science and Society Reporting Questionnaire' covers the following issues : 'ethics'; 'gender'; 'science education, training

and career development'; 'engaging with actors beyond the research community'; and 'use and dissemination'. The section on 'gender' only needed to be completed for CAs, SSAs and STREPS because the IPs and NoEs had to report separately on the implementation of their Gender Action Plan by means of an online GAP Implementation Report.

The section on 'gender' in the Science and Society Reporting Questionnaire contained three questions. The first closed question asked whether Gender Equality Actions had been undertaken in the project (with yes / no answer options), and contained two sub-questions. If the answer to the first question was 'no', the sub-question that followed asked 'why', with as answer options 'not relevant', 'team not gender aware', 'no budget', 'not supported / no will', 'other'. If the answer to the first question was 'yes', the sub-question asked which actions were carried out and how effective these had been (on a five-points scale), with only three types of actions mentioned: 'design and implement an equal opportunity policy'; 'implement mentoring schemes for women'; 'family friendly working conditions'. No 'other' option was foreseen for this sub-question.

The second question asked whether there was a gender dimension associated with the research content (with no / yes answer options and a specification box in case 'yes' was ticked), and the third question asked for an estimated budget that was spent in the project on considering and dealing with gender issues.

As the set of questions was constructed it seems that the heading 'Gender Equality Actions' was meant to cover actions to support and increase women's participation in the project (referring to the first gender mainstreaming objective), while the second question dealt with gender in the research content (the second objective).

It can be observed that the restricted phrasing of the questions and answer options did not provide for much information to be retrieved from completed questionnaires, reducing the potential of this reporting tool for useful exploitation during the implementation stage, or later on (with a view to planning a new policy cycle).

Looking back at the set of provisions that had been put in place to ensure that applicants and (once their project approved for funding) project holders would integrate gender into their project, we can conclude that these were quite complete when considering the different stages in the project cycle (from proposal preparation to project implementation and reporting). Still, there are shortcomings, and variability can be observed when comparing the provisions set in place for the two FP6 areas that were analysed. For Priority 7, the double objective with regard to gender equality was clearly outlined, but not given much prominence, as this outlining was done in an Annex to the Work Programme. In the Science and Society area then, the 'role of women in science' was a central focus of the work to be performed, but seemed to isolate attention for gender in this area as no references to gender were made in relation to the other topics to be addressed under Science and Society. Also, we note that the EC seemed to have assumed that applicants and project holders would be capable of integrating gender in their

work without the need for any awareness-raising and/or support measures. It appears that this important flaw was recognised, albeit quite late in the framework programme implementation cycle, by the Women and Science unit of the DG Research, as this unit published at the end of 2005 (whereas FP6 ran from 2002 till 2006) a support tool to help applicants and project holders with the design of a Gender Action Plan – a tool which was however only mandatory for the biggest projects.

3.3. Proposal evaluators

This section first addresses the planning stage, explaining the procedures developed for the evaluation of proposals by external experts under FP6 and subsequently looking into the instructions for the evaluators in order to check whether and how these instructions deal with gender issues. Evaluators received their instructions in the form of a document, the ‘Guide for Evaluators’, as well as through a briefing. Both are reviewed in this section. Next, we turn to the implementation of the evaluation by the evaluators to see how gender has been addressed by these actors.

Evaluation procedures

The evaluation and selection of proposals is carried out by the Commission with the assistance of independent experts. These evaluators are selected by the Commission. The ‘Guidelines on Proposal Evaluation and Selection Procedures’ used under FP6 specify: *‘All independent experts must have a high level of professional experience in the public or private sector in one or more of the following areas or activities: research in the relevant scientific and technological fields; administration, management or evaluation of projects; use of the results of research and technological development projects; technology transfer and innovation; international cooperation in science and technology; development of human resources.’* In selecting the experts, the Commission not only seeks a balance between the various competencies required for evaluating the proposals submitted for the various areas covered by the respective call, but, still according to the Guidelines, also seeks: *“an appropriate range of competencies; an appropriate balance between academic and industrial expertise and users; a reasonable gender balance; a reasonable distribution of geographical origins of independent experts; regular rotation of independent experts.”*

While the sex of the evaluators does seem to matter, the availability of gender expertise is thus not an explicit criterion for the composition of evaluators’ teams.

The experts themselves are expected to be independent (they are working in a personal capacity and in performing the work do not represent any organisation), impartial and objective, and to behave throughout in a professional manner. They conform to the “Code of Conduct for independent experts appointed as evaluators” which is appended to the “Guidelines on proposal evaluation and selection procedures” and must sign a confidentiality and conflict of interest declaration prior to beginning their work.

Before starting their work, the evaluators are briefed by the responsible Commission staff on the elements related with their evaluation work, including on the evaluation criteria. They also receive the call-specific documents published by the Commission, including the 'Guidance Notes for Evaluators', and the general 'Guidelines on Proposal Evaluation and Selection Procedures'. These are the documents that set out the conditions under which evaluators have to do their work, and which therefore will be checked for references to gender issues.

Evaluators first individually have to assess the proposals according to a set of pre-defined criteria which are different according to the type of instrument. Evaluators examine the individual issues comprising each block of evaluation criteria and mark the blocks on a six-point scale from 0 to 5 (whereby 0 stands for 'the proposal fails to address the issue under examination or cannot be judged against the criterion due to missing or incomplete information', 1-'poor', 2-'fair', 3-'good', 4- 'very good', and 5-'excellent'). Subsequently the evaluators discuss their individual judgements in consensus meetings. The discussion of the proposal continues until a consensus is achieved i.e. a conclusion with which all agree regarding the marks for each criterion and the accompanying comments.

During the evaluation session, Commission staff assists the evaluators without influencing the evaluation itself. The work of an evaluator is under the supervision of the Commission officials organising the evaluation. In consensus and panel meetings Commission staff may act as moderators, seeking consensus between the independent experts, without any prejudice for or against particular proposals or the organizations involved.

Guide for evaluators and evaluation criteria

The Guide for Evaluators includes the following references to gender issues :

- Evaluators are instructed to check the horizontal issues, among which gender, to be addressed, and to make recommendations where relevant : *"Gender – are there any gender issues associated with the subject of the proposal and, if so, have they been adequately taken into account?"*

This instruction to the evaluators not only seems to assume that evaluators know about the double objective of the EC with regard to gender equality, it also suggests that all evaluators have the capacity to assess whether or not there are gender issues associated with the research subject. Furthermore, the fact that there are no marks to be given by the evaluators to express their judgement in respect of gender, indicates that those setting in place the structural provisions for the implementation of the Sixth Framework Programme attached a lower importance to these issues than to the other aspects that had to be assessed.

- The Consensus Report itself contains a section under 'horizontal issues to be addressed – but not marked' referring to gender issues. The question to the evaluators reads as follows: *"Are there gender issues associated with the subject of the proposal? If so, have they been adequately taken into account?"*

- The Consensus Report also contains a section ‘overall remarks,’ “highlighting strengths and weaknesses and providing recommendations for project negotiation, including recommended levels of resources, if relevant. Include comments on the horizontal issues addressed in the evaluation i.e. gender, safety, public outreach, education.”
- Only for Networks of Excellence, the Individual Assessment Form contains under the block ‘Organisation and management,’ which is to be marked, the following element to be assessed: *“the extent to which there is a well-considered plan for promoting gender equality in the network”*.

Since under FP6 the proposal assessment forms were generic and applied across FP6 to all Priorities, the planning of the implementation did not foresee the possibility to tailor individual assessment forms to better suit the purposes and nature of the Priorities. A different formulation of the question, better adapted to the nature of the ‘Science and Society’ and SSH activities, which is per definition relevant to gender, was therefore not possible.

Briefing of evaluators

About the briefing of evaluators, the Guidance Notes for Evaluators states: *“Evaluators will be provided with a briefing by Commission staff before the evaluation begins, covering the evaluation procedure, technical issues involved in the particular strategic objective/ research objective/research topic and the horizontal issues to be taken into consideration in the evaluation.”*

These briefings are given orally, supported by slides, and complement the documentation provided to the evaluators in printed form²⁶.

The Women and Science unit of the DG Research, in its Vademecum (European Commission, 2003c), points out to the scientific officers / project officers the importance of briefing the evaluators on gender issues. The Vademecum states notably:

“Evaluators should receive information about

1. what we mean by gender equality
2. how gender issues link with the Work Programmes and General Provisions, as well as the general objective of the Commission
3. where gender issues do/should appear in the proposals
4. how to handle gender issues in the evaluation”

To ease this task of briefing evaluators about the gender issues, a slide show was prepared by the Women and Science unit and its use highly recommended. This slide show is attached to the Vademecum. It counts six slides and aimed to answer four questions: “What do we mean

²⁶ As mentioned above: call text, Guidance notes for evaluators, General Guidelines on Proposal Selection and Evaluation Procedures.

by gender equality? Where does gender appear in relevant documents and what is the general objective of the Commission? Where do/should gender issues appear in the proposals? How to handle gender issues during the evaluation?” It does not however give a clear ‘definition’ of what is meant with gender equality, but rather points out the dimensions of the concept addressed by the Framework Programme: the gender dimension of the research content and women’s participation, as illustrated by the below inserted copy of the respective slide.

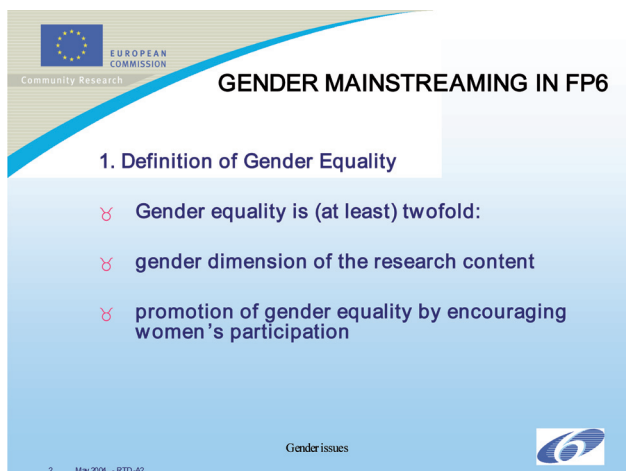


Figure 3.1: Interpretation of Gender Equality in FP6 - slide prepared by the ‘Women and Science’ unit for the briefing of proposal evaluators

Being interested also in *the implementation* of this briefing provision, the review of all evaluation reports and independent observer reports indicates that evaluation sessions indeed always started with a briefing of the evaluators. None of these reports include any specific comments in relation to a briefing on gender issues.

A short internal survey was organised among all call coordinators of the first 13 ‘Science and Society’ calls (as those were the calls that had been completed by that time) in order to verify whether and how evaluators were briefed on gender issues. These coordinators were asked to answer a few questions in this respect. The results of this inquiry indicated that the gender-specific slide show prepared by the Women and Science unit had not been used in any of these calls for Science and Society. The main reason given was lack of time. However, in general, gender was mentioned during the briefing as a horizontal issue. The exceptions are the calls for the Descartes Prizes (calls 8 and 12) and for the European Science Week (call 13) where gender was not mentioned at all; and the ‘Women and Science’ calls (10 and 17) and call 6 which were gender-specific.

Implementation: assessments by proposal evaluators

As said before, given the very nature of the ‘Science and Society’ and SSH activity areas, one can safely assume that for all projects submitted in response to calls under these areas, gender

is of relevance and hence that this relevance had to be recognised and adequately addressed by the proposers. Evaluation experts' role therefore included assessing to what extent and how gender was effectively addressed.

Turning now to the implementation of the evaluation provisions under FP6, the Evaluation Summary Reports (ESR) of all proposals for these areas²⁷ that were evaluated above all thresholds as well as of gender specific projects²⁸ that failed were reviewed in order to identify how gender was addressed by the evaluation experts.²⁹ The ESR is the outcome of the evaluation process for a specific proposal: it is the Consensus Report in the form this document is accepted by the EC and sent as feedback to the proposers. The decision to analyse all ESRs of proposals evaluated above all thresholds is extensive, because these are the positively evaluated proposals, which are not necessarily funded. Only the highest ranked proposals are invited for contract negotiations insofar the budget foreseen for the call allows. The decision to analyse also the ESRs of those gender-specific proposals that failed aims at verifying whether gender-specific proposals were fairly evaluated, or whether a bias could have existed against them.

In total, 433 ESRs were reviewed for 'Science and Society' (330 proposals that passed all thresholds and 103 gender specific projects that failed) and 210 for Priority 7 (194 proposals that passed all thresholds and sixteen gender specific projects that failed).

For all proposals that passed all thresholds in the evaluation, the review of the ESR included:

- whether any reference is made in the evaluation summary report to gender issues;
- when gender is mentioned in the ESR, whether it concerns the content of the project and/or the participation of women and men in the project team (qualitative and/or quantitative approach to gender);
- whether the absence of any reference to gender in proposals is identified by the evaluators and whether this was held against the project.

For the gender specific projects that failed, the reasons for failing were looked into, and which were the assessment criteria that were considered as insufficiently fulfilled by the evaluators.

In total, there were 524 proposals evaluated above all thresholds (accumulating Science and Society and Priority 7). Nearly 60% of the ESRs (306, or 58 %) relating to these proposals do not mention gender at all, suggesting that evaluators ignored the gender question. Even in cases where there are very obvious gender issues associated with the project, ESRs did not refer to gender. Below are a few examples.

²⁷ All 20 'Science and Society' calls (excluding the Descartes Prize calls) and both Priority 7 (SSH) calls.

²⁸ In the gender monitoring work for these areas, all the proposal abstracts were read and on this basis gender specific projects identified.

²⁹ A full analysis of all ESRs would have exceeded the resources available within the scope of the gender monitoring study.

One S&S project with 13 partners (of which 5 had female project responsible persons) that got approved for financing aims to design a bioethical university education programme addressing as three main topics 'beginning of life', 'organ transplantation' and 'the end of life', and claims it will take a multi-cultural, multi-disciplinary and multi-religious approach. The ESR does not make any reference to the gender issues associated with the research subject. Although there are obvious gender issues related to the research topics (as for example women and men are very differently affected by the issue of the beginning of life and may have significantly different views on the ethical topics), the evaluators do not seem to have assessed the adequacy of how these are addressed in the project.

A project (funded under S&S) with an all-male project team (8 partners) aims to introduce the European youth in the world of science and technology by engaging school and university students and young science amateurs in innovative multidisciplinary 'Science Games'. No reference to gender is made in the ESR of this proposal, although science and technology are very (male) gendered concepts.

Although a Gender Action Plan was mandatory in the proposals for IPs and NoEs, ESRs were found of such proposals not containing a GAP but still having passed all thresholds, without any remark made in the ESR about the omission of the GAP. This suggests that the GAP requirement as hard incentive has not been fully effective.

One project (NoE) with 13 partners (of which two have female project responsables), approved for funding under CIT-1, aims to set up a network gathering 'science and innovation policy' specialists from four disciplines (economics, sociology, political sciences and management). It intends to focus activities on ST&I indicators, training and interaction with stakeholders. There is no Gender Action Plan included in the proposal, although this is mandatory. The ESR does not make any reference to gender.

Of the 524 Evaluation Summary Reports of proposals that passed all thresholds, 218 (42%) contain references to gender.

Such remarks either referred to the participation of women in the project, to the research contents, or to both aspects. The vast majority (189, or 87 %) of the ESRs that refer to gender deals with the gender dimension in the research content. The female participation in the project was referred to in 88 ESRs (40 % of those ESRs containing a reference to gender). In 29 (of the 189) cases (or 15%) where the ESR refers to gender in the research contents, a quantitative approach is taken to gender (looking at numbers of women as research objects or as target audiences).

When ESRs contain a reference on gender, such statements are in about half the cases saying something positive or neutral (52%). In a quarter of the cases containing a reference on gender, evaluators merely make a neutral observation. Most of these were simply recognitions that gender was addressed in the content of the project. About 40% of them also recognised the participation of women in the project team. Some examples of such comments are:

"The proposal gives great attention to the gender dimension."

"The proposal also takes into consideration gender aspects which are well integrated in the proposed activities."

"There is a high rate of participation of women, and in central positions."

Only in 98 ESRs (45 % of those ESRs containing a reference to gender, or 19 % of all ESRs of proposals evaluated above all thresholds), critical remarks were given; sometimes in combination with praising statements. Within the Science and Society area, one third of these critical remarks were given in ESRs of proposals submitted under the 'Women and Science' calls (calls 10 and 17), whereas the proportion of the ESRs from these two calls in the total of reviewed Science and Society ESRs amounts to 19%. This indicates a higher attention for gender issues on the part of the evaluators of gender specific calls, which is not really surprising as gender is the central focus of these proposals and evaluators under these calls are selected for their gender expertise.

The overall low occurrence of critical statements suggests an apparent uncertainty and lack of capacity of the expert evaluators with regard to the assessment of gender issues, rather than the true quality of the proposals in respect of how gender is addressed. The review of the proposals has shown that projects got approved for funding, despite their shortcomings as regards gender issues, even when these were recognised by the evaluators. This observation supports the argument that these evaluators did not relate an inadequate addressing of gender in the proposal to its overall quality. The examples below illustrate this observation.

A project approved for financing aiming to design and develop ICT-enhanced training modules on Material Properties for 10-15 year olds fails to address the gender issues associated with the project. The proposal receives an impressive 24 (out of 25) score, and the evaluators only point out under the overall remarks in the ESR that "the application would be even stronger if there was specific consideration of gender issues".

Another (all-male) project approved for funding deals with understanding of the ethical issues posed by emerging nanotechnologies and is completely gender-blind. The ESR states under the general comments: "As gender issues are relevant for the topics addressed it would be helpful to involve women in the consortium as well (all participants are male)." Under the evaluation criterion 'quality of the management', the ESR also points out that "gender issues are not mentioned in the proposal".

The last of the above examples also learns us something about the interpretation of the gender equality objective under FP6 on the part of these evaluators. The statement put in this ESR suggests that the evaluators of this proposal linked an increased gender-awareness in the project to a higher participation of women, as if solving the problem of gender in science can be realised by merely increasing women's participation.

On a positive note, where critical remarks were provided, these quite frequently identified specific areas in the research content where gender was not or insufficiently addressed, thus enabling to take on these elements in a possibly following negotiation phase.

A project approved for funding aims to develop capacity in clinical research ethics review in developing countries. The proposal poorly addresses the gender issues associated with the project, and this is identified by the evaluators. The ESR states : "The gender issue is poorly addressed since it is clear women are not only victims and or care givers to children, but are also key stones in progression of prevention ideas and organisation. The only quoted item in the proposal is to pay attention to the rate of female participation in the workshops. More attention has to be given to the qualitative aspects in the construction of the search for participating organisations, and to capacity building, since several attempts based only on medical bodies branches were again and again destroyed by the high turnover of responsibilities and professionals."

Relating to a proposal for setting up and running a citizens' panel on brain science, the ESR states: "Gender issues should be given more consideration (female behaviour in debate situations but also the so-called 'female brain')."

The review of the provisions for the proposal evaluators has shown that there were indeed structural measures foreseen so that the evaluators would take gender equality into account in the implementation of their task: the Guide for Evaluators does contain instructions related to gender equality and a specific briefing tool had been developed. However, the basic instructions document (the Guide for Evaluators) did not explain the dual gender equality objective, gender issues were not to be marked by the evaluators (whereas evaluators had to attribute a score for other evaluation criteria, no score was to be given related to gender) and neither were evaluators properly briefed on the gender equality objective under FP6 and how they were to contribute to it, as the briefing tool was not used. In how it conceived proposal evaluations under FP6, the EC seemed to have assumed that evaluators had sufficient prior knowledge of gender in science to assess whether proposal topics were gender relevant and whether gender issues were properly addressed in the proposals. That assuming such knowledge on the part of actors during the planning stage is an error has become clear from the review of the actual implementation of evaluations, which has revealed that across the board gender was not adequately addressed by the evaluators.

3.4. Independent observers

The present section first describes the role and provisions foreseen under FP6 for the independent observers, and subsequently looks into how the independent observers addressed gender in the implementation of their role within the areas of Science and Society and Priority 7.

Proposal evaluation sessions that take place in Brussels are reported upon by an ‘independent observer’ (if any) who attends the sessions and whose role it is to assess and report on the proceedings of the evaluation session. Independent observers attend the briefing that evaluators receive, and thus know what is expected from the evaluators within the context of the gender equality policy of the European Commission in the research field. The independent observer should conform to the “Code of Conduct for independent observers” which is appended (Annex D) to the “Guidelines on proposal evaluation and selection procedures”. There is no form or structure imposed for the report the independent observers have to present. Nevertheless, it appeared that an unofficial model for such report (dated October 2003) has been provided to independent observers as an indicative outline at least in a number of cases. Neither the briefing, the description of the role of the independent observer, nor the unofficial model for the observer’s report suggest that the independent observer should verify whether and to what extent the gender dimension is understood and taken into account by the evaluators during their assessments.

An ‘independent observer report’ includes a review of the evaluation process and proceedings, of the understanding and application of the evaluation criteria by the evaluators, the results of the evaluation exercise, comments on administrative and logistical issues, as well as recommendations for the future.

While the above described the implementation plan, what follows looks into *the actual implementation* by the independent observers. Twelve independent observer reports from ‘Science and Society’ evaluation sessions were reviewed³⁰. There were seven different authors for these reports, of which one person had written three. Of the twelve reports:

- three contained no reference to gender whatsoever,
- one refers only indirectly to gender when stating that the teams doing the consensus meetings were ‘*well composed in terms of number, age, gender, nationalities*’.
- five mention the sex breakdown of the evaluation experts, of which one (reviewing two sessions running in parallel) expresses concern for the high share of women among these experts (70% and 100% were women for these respective sessions), while recognising the

³⁰ According to the information provided by the EC, seventeen evaluation sessions (calls 1 to 20, whereby call 1 had 4 evaluation sessions) were attended by an independent observer. One independent observer covered two sessions that ran in parallel (fourth cut-off date of call 1, and call 6) and produced one report covering his observations of both sessions. The independent observer reports produced for call 2 and call 15 could not be provided.

progress made by the Commission on gender balance : *“As one of the targets for activity in these areas is to develop a strategy to influence policy makers (of which inevitably many are male) it may be that inviting male policy makers to take part (provided that they understood women’s issues) would be beneficial.”* This phrase is quite remarkable because the author seems to find a gender imbalance among evaluators in favour of women as problematic, whereas the person is aware of the unequal gender balance in favour of men among policy-makers which on the contrary is referred to as ‘inevitable’. Another one (reviewing the evaluation session of call 19, which was split in two ‘sections’ with different evaluation panels) points out the gender imbalance in favour of women in one of the panels: *“As far as gender is concerned, there were more women than men in this section of the call but considering both sections the overall gender balance was good.”* Also this sentence is rather striking, taking into consideration that more frequently occurring imbalances in favour of men most often are not considered as worth to be highlighted.

- In the report referring to call 10 ‘Women and Science 2004’ the independent observer notes some difficulties related to the fact that this had been the first call for ‘Gender Research’: a high number of proposals was received on many different themes and this required a very broad range of backgrounds / competencies to be available among the evaluation experts. Apparently, this independent observer considered that ‘gender expertise’ as common ground for the evaluation of the proposals was not enough, but that additional expertise on the various themes addressed by the proposals was needed.
- The report relating to call 16 ‘Science education and careers 2005’ reports on the results from a brief questionnaire that was completed by the evaluators, and mentions two important remarks about gender issues that suggest missing gender competence among the evaluators: *“One female evaluator stated that in her opinion gender issues have not been properly taken into account by all evaluators”* and *“One evaluator suggested to give all experts a better briefing or a training in gender issues”*.
- The independent observer in the session covering the second ‘Woman and Science’ call (Call 17) notes that efforts were undertaken by the Commission to have at least one man present in each evaluation panel. The independent observer further found *“that the (few) man experts were less competent”*.

As regards Priority 7 (SSH), the independent observer reports from the two evaluation sessions³¹ organised for the first call (CIT1, CIT2 and CIT3), as well as those of the two sessions³² for the second call (CIT4, CIT5, CIT6) were reviewed. This analysis indicates that one of the independent observers (a woman) made more pertinent comments than the others. This was the most adequate monitoring that was identified about how gender was treated

³¹ Proposals submitted for CIT1 and CIT2 were evaluated during one evaluation sessions that took place between 16/06/03 and 04/07/03.

³² The evaluation sessions for the first stage of CIT4, CIT5 and CIT6 were run in parallel from June 15 to 21, 2005 and were attended by one independent observer. CIT4 was a two-stage evaluation process, so for the second stage evaluation, there has been a separate independent observer report.

during the evaluations, and did point out areas of concern. The other independent observers (two men and one woman) made only a general statement in relation to gender or to the sex of the evaluators.

- The independent observer of the evaluation exercise relating to CIT1 and CIT2 makes important comments in her report with regard to the treatment of gender issues in the evaluation. She finds that the proposal template does not allow evaluators to properly assess whether gender issues are adequately addressed by the applicants. The observer notes: *“Another issue of concern is the extent to which important issues relating to gender and relevance to EU priorities are being given proper consideration in proposals. How can evaluators judge this? There is a tendency for proposers to just include the right key words to show that they are covering these issues. However, the extent to which these issues are properly worked into the overall project approach is not always so clear. A number of the Panel Meeting Reports propose more detailed application forms and guidance notes to ensure that key information for easy reference and proper evaluation of the proposals is provided by proposers in the appropriate format. These proposals should be given due consideration since they provide the means for improving proposal submission and related evaluation processes, particularly in the case of the new instruments.”* As a recommendation, the independent observer states: *“An assessment of whether proper attention is being given to issues related to gender and relevance to EU priorities, is not an easy task for evaluators and more attention needs to be given to ensuring that these issues are not merely included as lip-service in proposals but that they are comprehensively treated throughout the proposal. The proposal template could be re-designed accordingly to move away from mere use of keywords to an appropriate inclusion/coverage of these issues in approach, dissemination and quality of the consortium.”*
- The independent observer of the evaluation exercise relating to CIT3 simply mentions in his report that “during the different phases of the evaluation process the gender issue in the proposals was dealt with in a consistent way”, a sentence which does not give any specific information.
- The independent observer report of CIT4 (2nd stage) points out that *“the corps of evaluators seems to be an appropriate mix along age, gender and career dimensions.”* No reference is made to how gender issues were dealt with by evaluators.
- Also in the report of the independent observer of CIT4 (first stage), CIT5 and CIT6, there is only a statement concerning the evaluators: *“The Commission is advised to continue the practice of forming the evaluation teams that are heterogeneous by gender and academic backgrounds.”*

Summarising the lessons from the review of both stages, there are a number of issues that can be noted as problematic for the capacity of the independent observers to ‘do gender’. First of all, as regards the planning of the gender mainstreaming strategy in terms of provisions put in place for the independent observers, there has not been a briefing for them on their specific

role in the wider EU gender mainstreaming approach in the Framework Programme. Second, there has not been a requirement for them to report on their assessment of the functioning of the approach taken to gender in this particular stage of the FP implementation in which they take part, namely the proposal evaluation. This has resulted in a variable implementation by these actors in terms of their gender-related responsibilities.

Only a few independent observers demonstrated an adequate consideration of how 'gender' was addressed in the course of the evaluation, both in terms of representation of women among the evaluators and in terms of how gender issues were (or could be) dealt with by the evaluators. Still, considering that the independent observers were not explicitly instructed to consider also gender issues, this finding is quite remarkable because it indicates the willingness of these actors to contribute to the general EC policy and objectives as laid out in the overall Framework Programme documents. This finding suggests that action on the part of actors is not necessarily connected to fulfilment of the condition about them being 'equipped'. This finding furthermore seems to confirm the argument that non-action or inadequate action on the part of the actors is not automatically to be associated with resistance.

At the same time, it is to be noted that a number of possibly inhibiting factors to effective gender mainstreaming can also be excluded here: there has been sufficient time (no work overload, as the independent observers during an evaluation session only have to observe, listen and talk if they so wish with evaluators) for the independent observers to duly take up gender in their task, and there are no specific financial or infrastructural resources needed to assess sex- and gender-relevant aspects of the evaluation session.

The above suggests that the main inhibiting factors at play on the part of the independent observers are either a lack of understanding of how gender inequities are (re-)produced in research teams and projects and of how this can be addressed, or an underestimation of the importance to act upon these issues (hence a denial of the relevance of gender mainstreaming in research) which could be considered as 'resistance'. However, given the attention that has in most cases been paid by independent observers to whether the group of evaluators reflected a fair mix in terms of sex, nationalities, age, backgrounds, etc., it can be assumed that incapacity (a lack of insight) rather than unwillingness was the main reason why they did not address gender adequately.

3.5. Negotiators / Project officers

The negotiators are the Commission's officials who negotiate with applicants whose proposal passed the evaluation and is likely to receive funding, on the condition that certain adjustments are made or measures taken to address some critical points that were identified by the expert evaluators in their evaluation of the proposal. It is usually this person in charge of the negotiation for the Commission that becomes the scientific or project officer who follows the project's implementation once the contract is signed.

The present section looks into the provisions for enabling the Commission officials who had to take the role of scientific officers to take on their gender related responsibilities. The actual implementation of these gender mainstreaming provisions are reported upon in the chapters that follow (notably chapters 4, 5 and 6) in which the focus is on the project level.

Vademecum: Gender Mainstreaming in the 6th Framework Programme – Reference Guide for Scientific Officers/Project Officers

The main guidance document for scientific officers / project officers about how to concretely implement the gender mainstreaming throughout the whole cycle, from the publication of a call for proposals to the follow-up of the contracts with project holders, is the ‘Vademecum - Gender Mainstreaming in the 6th Framework Programme – Reference Guide for Scientific Officers/Project Officers,’ developed by the Women & Science unit of the DG Research and published in March 2003 (European Commission, 2003c).

This document contains three main parts:

- the legal base for gender mainstreaming in scientific research, including a list of all references to gender issues in the respective decisions and regulations;
- a definition of gender equality;
- a description of the gender mainstreaming tasks in the practice, whereby the cycle of a call in the framework programme is broken down in seven stages.

In annex, it contains the same one-page document ‘Integrating the gender dimension in FP6 projects’ as included in the different Guides for Proposers.

The so-called ‘definition’ of gender equality given in this Vademecum states:

By gender equality, we want to embrace two different issues:

the “gender dimension of the research content”

the “promotion of gender equality by encouraging women’s participation”

This can be symbolically represented by the following simple formula: $GE=GD+WP$

GE: Gender Equality

GD: Gender Dimension of the Research Content

WP: Encouraging Women’s Participation

This ‘definition’ clearly presents the dimensions addressed, but is quite succinct in the sense that no clarification is offered on mechanisms or ultimate goals that are pursued.

The seven stages identified in the Vademecum for the practical implementation of gender mainstreaming are:

1. Proposal phase
2. Encoding phase
3. Composition of the evaluation panel

4. Briefing of evaluators
5. Evaluation
6. Contract negotiations
7. Follow-up

For each of these phases, the Vademecum (European Commission, 2003c) mainly points out the requirements for the applicants / project holders. To a lesser extent, some responsibilities on the part of the project officers are presented.

For example, for stage 3 'composition of the evaluation panel', officers are (on page 3) informed that "The 40% target for women's participation in evaluation panels applies in FP6. When forming the panels, scientific officers should pay attention to this target. [...] Directorates should raise the attention of their stakeholders (programme committees, NCP's, EAG's, etc.) on the need to encourage women's applications to be expert-evaluator. Parallel to this (important) quantitative dimension, it would be appropriate that some members of the panel (men and/or women) have a gender expertise complementary to their main field of expertise."

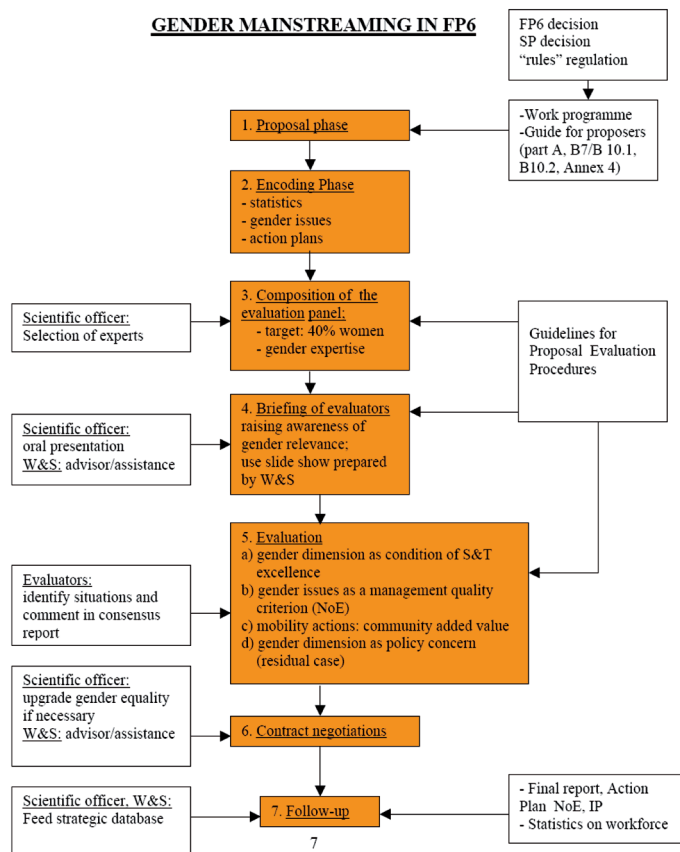


Figure 3.2: Gender responsibilities in FP6 (Vademecum, page 7)

A flow chart (on page 7 of the Vademecum, and copied here) summarises the gender issues and responsibilities in the various stages. This flow chart nicely shows how the planning of the gender mainstreaming strategy under FP6 followed the different stages of the project cycle, whereby it was attempted to ensure the consideration of gender issues in each stage by pointing out the expected contributions from the different actors involved in the respective stages.

According to this chart, the scientific officers have a formal responsibility in relation to gender in the composition of the evaluation panel (the implementation of which is reported upon in the chapter that follows), for the briefing of the evaluators (the present chapter has already shown this provision was not adequately implemented), during the contract negotiations (an analysis of the results thereof is reported upon in section 6.2.), as well as in the follow-up of the projects' implementation (sections 5.4. and 6.4. look more closely into the project reporting and how gender issues were, or could be, monitored on this basis).

Monitoring of reporting by project holders

As set out above, the Science and Society Reporting Questionnaire that project holders were to submit contained a section on gender. This reporting tool had to serve monitoring and evaluation purposes. However, the questionnaire design did not allow useful analysis of the state of play within these projects as regards gender. The questionnaire, essentially composed of closed 'yes/no' questions, does not allow a true insight into the reality of these projects. Questions aimed at the identification of difficulties, success factors or key issues would have been more revealing in this respect.

Turning very briefly to the *implementation stage* now, considering that the main responsibility for monitoring the projects' implementation lay with the project officers, it is surprising that hardly any such submitted questionnaires were available in SESAM (the European Commission's online reporting tool for research projects funded under the Framework Programme) by May 2007. This very low number raises questions: on the usability of SESAM as well as on the use made of these reports by the European Commission. It seems as if nobody in the Commission monitored the extent to which project holders respected this reporting obligation as well as the actual information provided through these reports.

For those projects that had to have a Gender Action Plan (Integrated Projects and Networks of Excellence), the GAP interim implementation reports were reviewed. The findings of this review are reported upon in section 6.4. of the chapter dealing with the GAPs (Chapter 6).

Number of projects – time resources of project officers

The number of projects each scientific officer is in charge of varies, and depends among others on the own scientific background and of the other responsibilities the respective person has in his or her unit in the DG Research.

For the Social Sciences and Humanities in FP6 (Priority 7), the published *Projects' Synopses* mention per project the scientific officer in charge of it. A count learns that fourteen persons have together monitored 160 projects. This is on average eleven projects per scientific officer. The minimum number was two projects, but one scientific officer has even been responsible for up to nineteen projects. Considering the 'capacity' of these project officers, notably in terms of time and 'span of control,' it can hardly be expected that they can adequately follow up so many projects.

For the 'Science and Society' field, the published *Projects Synopsis* does not indicate the responsible project officers and thus does not allow a count of the average number of projects each scientific officer has been in charge of.

In summary, looking back at the role intended for the scientific officers within the European Commission, it can be concluded they had clear responsibilities in various stages of the project cycle. However, apart from the Vademecum instructing them about their role and apart from the slide show that had been prepared for briefing evaluators (as set out earlier in this chapter), no specific resources or tools were put in place to support or enable them to adequately fulfil their tasks. The resources made available for the scientific officers have been insufficient and especially the absence of capacity-building initiatives for these actors is striking. Indeed, notably in relation to the role foreseen for them during contract negotiations as well as for the follow-up of projects, the EC seems to have assumed that its scientific officers *de facto* dispose of the required gender expertise to upgrade the way in which gender is addressed in the projects.

3.6. Descartes Prize evaluators and juries

Under the Science and Society area, four of the twenty calls were reserved for so-called Descartes Prizes. There have been Descartes Prizes for 'research,' rewarding outstanding research projects, and for 'communication' to reward outstanding science communication initiatives.

For the Descartes Research Prizes (calls 3, 8, 12 and 18 under the Science and Society activity area), Grand Juries selected the laureates from among the finalists, who were pre-selected by independent experts. For the Descartes Communication Prizes (calls 8, 12 and 18), the final selection of the winners was done by the panel presidents.

The 'Guidance Notes for Evaluators' for the Descartes Prizes contains no reference whatsoever to 'gender'. The note specifies explicitly (p. 6): "When examining proposals, evaluators may *only* apply the evaluation criteria which are set out in the Work Programme and shown on the evaluation forms. No other factors may be taken into consideration."

For the Descartes Research Prize, the selection had to be made according to two criteria: 'scientific excellence' and 'European Added Value'. Although generally recognised that 'scientific excellence' is not possible without participation of women, no reference to gender issues was made in the Individual Assessment Form for the Descartes Prize for Research under

call 8³³. Rather, this form only mentions – without further specifications - under criterion 1, ‘Excellence and quality’:

- ⇒ Quality and novelty of the results achieved
 - ⇒ Contribution to addressing key scientific and technological issues;
- and under criterion 2, ‘European Added Value’:
- ⇒ The extent to which the results of the research can only be achieved if carried out at European level and beyond
 - ⇒ The extent to which the proposal addresses key issues of the European Research Area (ERA).
- Both for Calls 12 and 18, the two selection criteria remained the same, but the description of the elements comprised by them had been slightly different (more specific) – although without reference to ‘gender’.

The three criteria used for selecting winners under the *Descartes Prize for Science Communication* were: ‘Excellence and quality’, referring to (for Call 8):

- ⇒ Effectiveness of the communication for the promotion of science among the public, including young people;
 - ⇒ Accuracy of the scientific content;
- ‘Relevance and impact’:
- ⇒ Effectiveness of the activity in raising the profile of science, engineering or technology among the public
 - ⇒ Activity’s contribution to science and society objectives
 - ⇒ Capability of the science communication action to address the main concerns and/or expectations of the European society
- ‘European Added Value’:
- ⇒ Capability of the science communication action or professional to represent a model for others across Europe.

Again, for Calls 12 and 18, the criteria were the same, although the description of what was covered by them was formulated slightly differently. No reference was made to gender, although it is to be noted that the criteria for ‘excellence and quality’ did specify explicitly ‘young people’.

The language used in the Guides for Evaluators is gender neutral. When referring to the evaluators, the terms used are ‘his / her’ observations, readings, judgements, etc.

Let us now turn our attention to the results of *the implementation* of the Descartes Prizes provisions. For the Descartes Research Prizes (calls 3, 8, 12 and 18), the Grand Juries who selected the laureates from among the finalists - who were pre-selected by independent experts³⁴ – comprised between 8 and 20 members, with a proportion of women that only in the last call met the 40% target:

³³ As included in the ‘Guidance Notes for Evaluators’ for call 8.

³⁴ The Commission did not provide information on the composition of these evaluators’ panels.

- Call 3: 8 members, of which 3 women (38%)
- Call 8: 14 members, of which 4 women (29%)
- Call 12: 14 members, of which 3 women (21%)
- Call 18: 20 members, of which 11 women (55%)

For the *Descartes Communication Prizes* (calls 8, 12 and 18), the final selection of the winners was done by the panel presidents. While for Call 12 the sex breakdown of the panel presidents was not given, the share of women in these panels for the other calls has been satisfactory:

- Call 8: of the 12 panel presidents, 5 were women (42%)
- Call 18: 6 out of the 12 panel presidents were women (50%)

For the Research Prizes, the percentage of submitted projects co-ordinated by women decreased over time. For the four calls, the proportion of projects coordinated by women is 12 %, a relatively low figure. Looking at the laureates, only one of the twelve research prizes was granted to a woman (8 %). The success rate of female co-ordinators for the Descartes Research Prize is therefore 4 %, while the success rate of projects co-ordinated by men is 6 %. None of the Descartes Research Prize-winning projects was gender-specific.

In 2005, a small monetary prize was introduced for five non-winners from among the short-listed proposals. Both in 2005 (call 12) and in 2006 (call 18), not only were there no female coordinators among the laureates of the Research Prize, also among the winners of the small monetary prize there were no women. For the Communication Prize, there were two women among the five winners of the small monetary prize in 2005, but none in 2006.

Summarizing this review, the analysis relating to the planning of the Descartes Prizes has revealed that no provisions were foreseen for integrating gender considerations into this FP6 activity, which is a clear shortcoming. Looking then at the implementation stage, considering the total of Descartes Prizes (both for research and communication), only four of the 27 prizes were awarded to women (8 %). This share is significantly below the average proportion of women among the coordinators/authors (15%). This result can be an indication of a gender-bias in the selection of winners which may possibly be explained by the absence of an explicit reference to gender in the criteria.

3.7. National Contact Points

National Contact Points (NCPs) play an important role as a communication channel towards potential participants in the Framework Programme. Their role is essentially to act as a relay between the European Commission and potential applicants. They organise awareness raising actions, information actions related to calls and often also offer in addition to information services, advisory services depending on their host's organisation strategies.

The profile of NCPs is very diverse, and even if they have a relationship with the European Commission, they are normally appointed by the Member States. This may possibly explain

why the EC had not put in place any provisions for ensuring the contribution of the NCPs to the implementation of the gender mainstreaming strategy under FP6.

During the FP6 *implementation stage*, a survey among all FP6 NCPs, based on a self-completion questionnaire³⁵, was organised centrally by the European Commission in the period October – November 2005 to support and feed into the gender monitoring studies. The results of the survey (raw data) were made available to the author in May 2006. The analysis below is essentially a comparison between the group of 32 respondents in charge of the domains ‘Knowledge Society’ (SSH) and ‘Science and Society’, in comparison to the ‘other’ NCPs who do not have this responsibility (a group of 54 respondents). Making this comparison allows to assess any differences in how gender issues are dealt with by the NCPs in charge of the fields analysed in this case and the NCPs in charge of other FP6 fields (like mobility, transport, food, etc.).

One questionnaire section started with the question “Has your NCP dealt with the issue of gender mainstreaming to date?” If the answer was positive, the other questions in the section were asked, if not, the whole section was skipped, including unfortunately a number of questions that would nevertheless have been relevant (such as the questions whether they considered DG Research had provided them with adequate information in respect of gender mainstreaming in FP6, whether they require further support from DG Research regarding gender mainstreaming, whether they are aware of the Vademecum on Gender Mainstreaming in FP6 and if so how they rated it, and also whether they had received any training in respect of gender mainstreaming).

The total sample for this section is 27 as 27 respondents answered positively to the question. Of these 27 respondents, 13 are from the sub-sample of 32 respondents covering ‘Science and Society’ and/or ‘Social Sciences and Humanities’, and 14 from other NCPs.

This result means that slightly less than one out of three NCPs (31%) have actually dealt in a way or another with the gender mainstreaming issue when promoting FP6 or assisting the various target groups. It can be assumed that the sample is positively biased, as NCPs having taken action are more likely to have answered the questionnaire³⁶. Based on this assumption, the real proportion of NCPs having taken action is probably significantly lower than this one third result from the survey. Also, the proportion undoubtedly varies according to the scientific field covered by the NCP: for the subgroup covering ‘Science and Society’ and/or ‘Social Sciences and Humanities’ it is higher than the average obtained across all NCPs (41%), while the survey done among NCPs of INFSO (Information Society Technologies) came up with the result that none of the NCPs had actually dealt with the subject.

³⁵ The self-completion questionnaire was developed by an external contractor, together with the European Commission. The author of the present research had no contribution in the design of the questionnaire.

³⁶ This is one of the disadvantages of self-completion questionnaires: there is self-selection by the respondent, and it is impossible to know the bias this creates.

Table 3.1: Importance of the promotion of gender mainstreaming in the work of the NCP

	Total sample (n=27)	NCPs covering 'S&S' and/or SSH (n=13)	Sample other lots (n=14)
Very important	4	3	1
Quite important	18	9	9
Not important	5	1	4

Not only is the proportion of 'Science and Society' ad/or 'Social Sciences and Humanities' NCPs having dealt with gender mainstreaming higher than the average, these NCPs also rate higher the importance of the promotion of gender mainstreaming in the whole of their work. This is shown in the table above.

A first observation that can be made based on the results is that, given the large proportion of NCPs that note to have taken any action on gender issues, there is a lot of potential for improving the promotion of gender mainstreaming objectives in the framework programme by stimulating NCPs to take up actions.

The results also show that there is variability in how NCPs take up action on gender issues. In certain domains, NCPs do not take action at all. This is probably either because the issue is (perceived as) of less relevance for their domain of responsibility or because NCPs feel less competent in the matter. In the domains where the issue is by definition relevant (like Science and Society and Knowledge Society), NCPs are much more active. However, even in these domains, a majority of NCPs has not taken any action.

The two tables below give the results on a set of questions related to the 'type of activities' undertaken by NCPs to support the gender dimension in FP6. The tables show whether this type of activity was undertaken by the NCP (given by the number of valid responses, whereas the NCPs that did not undertake an activity are reported as 'n/a', not applicable) and how important this activity is in their overall activities. The importance is provided by a score, whereby 5 is very important.

The first table gives the results for the full sample. The second table only for the NCPs covering 'Science and Society' and/or 'Social Sciences and Humanities'.

These results confirm that 'Science and Society' and/or 'Social Sciences and Humanities' NCPs are more active than other NCPs. This is the case across all types of activities. The difference is however highest on the last activity mentioned in the table which covers gender in the research content: 11 of the 16 NCPs reporting activity on this subject are from the 'Science and Society' and/or 'Social Sciences and Humanities' areas. This means that across the research areas, there is less difference in the importance that is attached to encouraging gender balance.

Table 3.2: Type of initiatives taken to support the gender dimension of FP6 - N=27 – results in absolute figures (respondents for all lots)

	N/A	Responses	Importance (score)
Awareness-raising about gender mainstreaming in FP6 amongst potential FP6 participants	5	22	3.5
Awareness-raising about gender mainstreaming in FP6 amongst current FP6 participants	5	22	3.8
Awareness-raising and/ or training targeted at women researchers/ scientists to increase female participation in FP6	5	22	3.5
Conferences, seminars or other events for potential applicants/ current FP6 project holders that include gender mainstreaming aspect	5	22	3.5
Assistance, advice, information or guidance on putting together a gender action plan as part of an Integrated Project or Network of Excellence	6	21	3.4
Any specific measures/initiatives to encourage participants in FP6 to integrate gender into research content?	11	16	3.3

Table 3.3: Type of initiatives taken to support the gender dimension of FP6. N=13 (respondents for 'Science and Society' and/or 'Social Sciences and Humanities') – numbers are absolute figures

	N/A	Responses	Importance (score)
Awareness-raising about gender mainstreaming in FP6 amongst potential FP6 participants	1	12	4.0
Awareness-raising about gender mainstreaming in FP6 amongst current FP6 participants	1	12	3.8
Awareness-raising and/ or training targeted at women researchers/ scientists to increase female participation in FP6	2	11	3.7
Conferences, seminars or other events for potential applicants/ current FP6 project holders that include gender mainstreaming aspect	1	12	3.5
Assistance, advice, information or guidance on putting together a gender action plan as part of an Integrated Project or Network of Excellence	1	12	3.6
Any specific measures/initiatives to encourage participants in FP6 to integrate gender into research content?	2	11	3.3

The results also show that ‘Science and Society’ and/or ‘Social Sciences and Humanities’ NCPs attach more importance to the activities they undertake. This is particularly so regarding awareness raising towards potential FP6 participants (with an importance score of 4.0 against an average of 3.5 for the full sample).

NCPs (who answered ‘yes’ to the first question) were asked whether or not they had ever received queries specifically on gender mainstreaming. The total number of queries received is quite low as reported by only 10 out of 27 NCPs. Again, ‘Science and Society’ and/or ‘Social Sciences and Humanities’ NCPs have received significantly more queries than other NCPs. Interesting to note is that NCPs say they could answer all queries.

The types of queries received are mainly:

- how to integrate gender into the project application (8)
- how to draw up a gender action plan (5)

With regard to the promotion of gender mainstreaming, a question was asked on the focus placed either on boosting female participation or on integrating the gender dimension in the research content. A large majority (22 of the 27 respondents) answered they devote equal attention to both.

There is a relatively high level of satisfaction among the NCPs with the information they received from the European Commission on gender mainstreaming in FP6.

Still, one out of three NCPs considers further assistance from DG Research regarding gender mainstreaming is needed.

The 9 NCPs who said they need further assistance, specified the following:

- Specific information materials (7)
- Specific training (5)
- Contact with the Women and Science Unit (3)
- Contact with scientific officers (2)

Table 3.4: Adequacy of information received from the European Commission

	Total sample (n=27)	NCPs covering ‘S&S’ and/or SSH (n=13)	Sample other lots (n=14)
Yes we received sufficient information	10	6	4
We received some information	12	6	6
Received information but considered it insufficient / inadequate / not useful	1	1	0
Received no information at all	4	0	4

Table 3.5: Need for further assistance from the European Commission

	Total sample (n=27)	NCPs covering ‘S&S’ and/or SSH (n=13)	Sample other lots (n=14)
Yes	9	6	3
No	11	5	6
Don't know	7	2	5

Only three NCPs said to have ever received training in respect to gender mainstreaming, and of those who did not two thirds would like to receive training. This indicates a perceived lack of expertise, and also suggests a positive attitude to the strategy.

The Vademecum on gender mainstreaming in FP6 is a specific tool that was developed by the Women & Science unit. It is a tool destined to scientific officers, but is known outside the Commission. Half of the NCP sample says to know the Vademecum and their assessment on the tool is very positive. The awareness of the tool is much higher among the ‘Science and Society’ and/or ‘Social Sciences and Humanities’ NCPs. This makes sense as they are much more likely to be in contact with the Science & Society Directorate and therefore have had access to the document.

Table 3.6: Awareness of the Vademecum on gender mainstreaming in FP6

	Total sample (n=27) (n=13)	NCPs covering ‘S&S’ and/or SSH	Sample other lots (n=14)
Yes	13	11	2
No	14	2	12

Table 3.7: Opinion on the Vademecum (n=13 – those who know the Vademecum)

	Total sample (n=13)	NCPs covering ‘S&S’ and/or SSH (n=11)	Sample other lots (n=2)
User friendly	8	7	1
Practical in terms of guidance provided	8	7	1
Relevant to your work	7	6	1
Facilitates gender mainstreaming	2	1	1
None of the above	1	1	0

The answer given “none of the above” is from a NCP who did not remember. It was too long time ago this person had read the Vademecum.

The same small group of 27 NCPs who said to have dealt with the issue of gender mainstreaming had to answer a question on the extent to which the NCP network itself had been useful as an awareness-raising mechanism about gender mainstreaming in FP6. Of the 27 NCPs who answered, only two considered the NCP network has been a useful forum for sharing ideas and promoting awareness about gender mainstreaming; twelve found that NCP network has had some impact in raising awareness / promoting gender mainstreaming; while thirteen were of the opinion that the NCP network has had little or no impact in promoting gender mainstreaming. There were no significant differences in this regard between the S&S or SSH NCPs and those from other areas.

Table 3.8: Awareness about the Helsinki group

	Total sample (n=27)	NCPs covering 'S&S' and/or SSH (n=13)	Sample other lots (n=14)
Yes	13	9	4
No	13	3	10
Don't know	1	1	0

Table 3.9: Awareness about the Women & Science unit

	Total sample (n=27)	NCPs covering 'S&S' and/or SSH (n=13)	Sample other lots (n=14)
Yes	17	10	7
No	8	2	6
Don't know	2	1	1

Two last questions asked related to the awareness about the existence of the Helsinki Group on women and science and the 'Women and Science' unit of the EC. Nearly half of the respondents said not to know about the Helsinki Group, and one out of three was not aware of the existence of the 'Women and Science' Unit in the DG Research. This is quite a surprising result for NCPs whose FP6 domains they are in charge of are central to gender issues, and because the 'Women and Science' Unit steers the 'women in science' focus within the Science and Society domain.

The last section of the questionnaire consisted mainly of open questions, and could be answered by all respondents. This analysis is limited to the 32 questionnaires of NCPs responsible for 'Science and Society' and/or 'Social Sciences and Humanities' domains (as not available for the total of NCPs). The analysis is essentially qualitative and should be interpreted with caution because of the limitations of the method and the small size of the sample.

Whenever meaningful, two sub-samples are compared: on the one hand the group of 13

respondents who said they have “dealt with the issue of gender mainstreaming” and the group of 19 NCPs who answered negatively to that same question.

The first question asked to the NCPs in this section was: “What are the key issues / main obstacles in your view in increasing female participation rates in the thematic area covered by your NCP (and in FP6 overall if you have thoughts)?”

Analysing the texts, answers can be grouped in three main categories:

- those who consider there are no obstacles, or that this is not an issue for FP6;
- those who have an opinion and give an answer to the question (other than the one above)
- those who do not reply or have no opinion.

The second question was similar but dealt with the content of the research. It was formulated as follows: “What are the main obstacles in your view in mainstreaming gender in research content in the thematic area covered by your NCP (and in FP6 overall if you have thoughts)?”

The main interesting result is that many responses are identical to the previous question. Responses were simply copy-pasted or the response “*nothing in addition to the above*” was given. This is the case for 15 of the 32 respondents

The answers received vary a lot, but three ‘types’ of obstacles can be distinguished :

- the subject has a low priority;
- the subject is well understood by the researchers, especially those dealing with the EC, and therefore there is not really a problem or obstacle;
- obstacles linked to ‘discrimination’ in general like male dominance, inferiority complex, gender stereotyping,

In summary, the EC had not instructed the NCPs to undertake action with regard to mainstreaming gender in the FP6 activities and neither were gender mainstreaming provisions put in place for them. It therefore does not really come as a surprise that the majority of NCPs recognises indeed not to undertake actions to promote gender equality in the FP6 activities. Based on the present survey results, the main conclusions (complementing each other) are that NCPs consider gender mainstreaming as irrelevant for their scientific domain, and that the majority of the NCPs are of the opinion that female participation and gender mainstreaming of the research content are irrelevant issues.

At the same time, only a few NCPs have ever received training on gender issues, and the two thirds of those who did not would welcome such training. This finding reveals a certain feeling of lacking competence (incapacity) among the NCPs.

3.8. Civil Society Organisations / external gender experts

As we have seen in the theoretical review of the conditions that gender scholars put forward for effective gender mainstreaming, consultation with and the involvement of representatives of civil society are regarded as very important. These ‘field experts’, as external stakeholders who

represent the ultimate beneficiaries of the policy, can not only usefully feed into the planning of gender mainstreaming, they can also help identify difficulties and suggest improvements during the implementation process. As non-hegemonic voices, they can avoid a de-politicization of the issue to happen within the policy sphere. Of course, this is only possible when these actors dispose of information and insights regarding the implementation and preliminary results thereof, and are allowed to have a 'voice' in the policy process. Gender scholars only consider (representatives of) civil society organisations as 'field experts' in this role, as civil society organisations are the 'natural' actors who usually have a mission to feed into the policy process. I argue however that also other profiles are capable of taking on the described role, if only they have access to the information and insights and are given a voice, and as long as they are gender specialists with knowledge of the policy problem to be addressed.

Turning now to FP6, we note that no provisions had been foreseen for the involvement of traditional women's movement organisations in the implementation of gender mainstreaming. Still, it cannot be said that no structural provisions were in place at all for the involvement of gender experts. Indeed, as explained before in section 1.4., gender monitoring studies were foreseen to take place under FP6 and these were to be performed by experts with relevant knowledge. The actual contracts were awarded to teams of academics as well as to professional gender consultants. Each contract covered certain parts of FP6 (addressing various scientific fields), and each contractor had interlocutors within the European Commission for each FP6 part to be monitored. The gender monitoring work was to be performed in three distinct monitoring 'rounds' of one year, each reported upon separately, and concluded at the end of the three-year contract by an overall synthesis report.

The terms of reference for the different monitoring studies furthermore specified that the European Commission would organise a conference in which the provisional results and recommendations following from the gender monitoring studies would be presented and discussed, with a view to feeding into preparation stage of the next Framework Programme (FP7). Also this provision can be considered as a planned opening for integrating external experts' views into the process.

Another initiative that is worth mentioning at this point is the establishment of a European Platform of Women Scientists under FP6, with seed money provided by the European Commission. This Platform was meant to give a voice to women scientists, to strengthen them through networking and to support their empowerment, including by providing them the opportunities to feed their views into the EU policy level.

We can thus conclude that structural provisions had been foreseen in the planning stage of FP6 to allow critical voices to be heard and to feed into the implementation process of the gender mainstreaming strategy. Insights into the implementation of the gender monitoring work under FP6 are provided in Chapter 7.

3.9. Conclusions in terms of capacity of the actors

This chapter looked at the capacity of the actors as provided through the procedures and measures installed by the European Commission and, up to the evaluation of proposals, as shown through the implementation thereof. What was structurally foreseen in FP6 in terms of provisions, instructions, measures, instruments to realise the gender mainstreaming objective has been reviewed. In other words, the planning of the gender mainstreaming implementation has been the main object of analysis. The approach of verifying actor per actor what was in place allows to detect whether all were sufficiently equipped for their task. This contributes in particular to answering the research question about which variabilities or unevenness existed already in the planning phase, as well as the research question about the conditions, notably where the availability of resources is concerned. However, also as regards the other research questions, this chapter helps to clarify the situation under FP6: the meaning given to gender equality in the formal documents has been analysed as well as the interpretation given to it by key actors, the absence of functioning accountability structures has come to light and different reasons for lack of (adequate) interventions by the actors were identified.

The analysis has revealed variability and unevenness in different respects. First, an important unevenness in the planning stage of gender mainstreaming in FP6 has been demonstrated: not all actors have been equally considered with a view to instructing, briefing and equipping them for their gender-related task. Actors could therefore not be expected to adequately 'do gender' and implement the policy as it had been conceived. Of the flaws in the 'gender project design' at the EU level, an important one seems to have been the omission of a comprehensive awareness-raising and capacity-building action. Indeed, one cannot expect from any actor not familiar with gender issues to take up responsibilities, comply with requirements and to adequately meet expectations when no awareness-raising and competence-building accompanying measures are in place and accessible for all actors. Another observation that can be made is that there were no adequate accountability structures put in place for the various actors. And even while applicants / project holders had to specify their efforts in terms of gender, there were no hard incentives in place to ensure this actually would happen.

As regards the implementation of the provisions, the analysis has also shown variability in how the provisions put in place have been used and in how the actors (in particular the evaluators and the independent observers) have fulfilled their gender-related tasks. Some actors performed adequately, others merely touched upon gender to give the impression of having taken it up, and still others ignored the gender-related responsibility. This variability translated into unevenness of the results: in those cases where gender was properly considered and addressed, the process allowed to improve the chances of the ambition being realised. Where gender was ignored or inadequately addressed, the realisation of the gender mainstreaming objectives was undermined. Furthermore, we have seen that when gender was addressed by actors (who overall were unprepared for gender-related tasks), the quantitative dimension (women's participation versus men's participation) tended to be more easily and more frequently

considered, this apparently being more accessible or understandable. This means that in the practice of the implementation, a reduced interpretation of the gender equality goal under FP6 is recognised. This has led to a 'shrinking' of the approach taken to gender in the process; not a discursive shrinking but a factual shrinking. The gender mainstreaming implementation thus contributed unevenly to the realisation of the two gender equality objectives.

As regards the conceptualisation of gender equality in FP6, the FP6 formal documents did set out how 'gender equality' in research was to be interpreted: both in terms of equal participation by men and women in Framework Programme activities and in terms of the gender dimension being addressed in the content of EU-funded projects. Also was it set out from the start (in the gender-specific annex to the 'Guide for Proposers') that what was pursued by the gender equality policy in the research domain is research 'with', 'for' and 'about' women. For this three-fold approach, a combination of measures was developed. Indeed, the participation of women at all levels and in all positions was emphasised ('with' women), gender-specific research ('about' women) was encouraged *inter alia* through specific calls and related funds, and various efforts were undertaken to make the research work itself gender-sensitive ('for' women), for example by pointing out gender relevant topics in the work programmes and calls for proposals, by including instructions for applicants in the Guide for Applicants.

However, despite the formulation of the three-fold ambition regarding gender equality in research, also some shortcomings could be identified. A first shortcoming is that the underlying definitions of the concepts that were used have remained largely unclarified or were not clearly motivated. Second, an ultimate (transformational) goal in terms of social justice or universal rights, underlying the policy, has not been explicitly clarified to justify the measures. Rather, 'excellence' in research has been presented as one of the main driving forces and motivators for gender equality in research, whereby it was put forward that gender-blind research cannot be excellent research – 'Excellence', after all, being the ambition of the EC with the so-called 'European Research Area' (ERA), a concept launched in 2000 on the initiative of Research Commissioner Philippe Busquin to improve Europe's competitiveness by strengthening its research activities. This practice of emphasising a policy goal (here 'excellence') from another policy domain than gender equality or justice (in this case the research domain), to propagate gender mainstreaming would be labelled as 'bending' by Lombardo, Meier and Verloo (2009), and as such regarded as problematic. I argue however that this manifestation of 'strategic framing', using the words of Pollack and Haffner-Burton (2000), is not problematic – at least not in this case, first of all because the argument that is used is undeniably true, and second because it has given space to (feminist) voices that were non-hegemonic in the research policy debates (as we have seen in the short overview of the history of gender mainstreaming in the European research policy in section 1.4.). And the result has not been a de-politicisation of the matter, as feared by gender theorists, because contestation and struggle have been, and still are, part and parcel of the process (as described notably in Chapter 7 of this work).

I conclude that despite the fact that there was no real clarity as regards concepts (which will

also be demonstrated further in this work, when gender mainstreaming in the projects is discussed), it does not seem that this lack of clarity or fuzziness in the conceptualisation of the goal by the European Commission has constituted the main stumbling block to achieving (more) results or has significantly compromised effects.

Let us now look whether the different conditions for effective gender mainstreaming were fulfilled. The first condition that I put forward is the organisation's willingness to question and address its own structures and deeply rooted values. The analysis has not revealed any particular effort or intention in this respect. Only one relevant reference could be found in the annex to the Guide for Proposers (and copied in the annex of the Vademecum for negotiators and project officers), which contains the phrase: *"Gender mainstreaming thus includes also changing the working culture."* However, this phrase was addressed at the applicants, and did not refer to the working culture within the European Commission itself.

As regards tackling gender mainstreaming as a 'staged' process, the analysis shows that there has been a planning stage in which structural provisions have been set in place, and that has preceded the actual implementation. It is furthermore worth to remember how 'gender mainstreaming' has been introduced in the EC research policy (see section 1.4.), whereby first an assessment of the state-of-play was done, followed by gender impact assessments at the end of FP5, upon the lessons of which the FP6 structural provisions and measures were developed. Moreover, gender monitoring studies were launched to monitor progress along the way, so that adjustments could be made where necessary and lessons drawn for the preparation of FP7. These gender monitoring studies were contracted out to external gender experts (academics and gender consultants), so this can be regarded as a structural provision for external involvement in the process, although no involvement of the women's movement had been foreseen. Based on the observations, one could say that gender mainstreaming in the EU research policy was introduced and put in place quite 'according to the book' and in line with what gender theorists proclaim – and thus that the second and the third of the earlier identified key conditions were fulfilled in the case of FP6, namely that gender mainstreaming was addressed as a staged process and that the involvement of external experts was foreseen. Accountability structures and measures appeared however largely missing.

The analysis of provisions and measures to support actors has shown that the structural provisions put in place to enable gender mainstreaming in FP6 were nevertheless quite comprehensive and aimed at facilitating the role of the various actors involved in the process. However, as said above, the review also shows that not for all actors were there provisions put in place.

Most has been foreseen for the applicants and project holders. Notably the explicitation of the expectations in the Work Programme and the Guide for Proposers, as well as the Gender Action Plan as a mandatory tool for the biggest projects, have been important elements.

For the evaluation of the proposals, the Commission uses external evaluators. While the

Commission strives to recruit 'balanced' evaluator teams, there is however no requirement (and hence no guarantee) that there are evaluators with gender expertise in such teams, as presence of gender expertise is not an explicit criterion for composing an evaluators team. The relevant expertise sought for among evaluators is in the first place related to the research fields of the calls in answer to which the proposals were submitted. Therefore, if gender expertise is available among evaluators, this is in most cases because these evaluators have a combined expertise profile (except for the Science and Society gender-specific calls), and thus have a multi-disciplinary competence. Whereas a slideshow presentation existed to brief the expert evaluators on how to deal with gender in the evaluation process, the use of this slideshow was not structurally planned or prescribed - and (looking at the implementation stage) it appeared that the slideshow was not used for reasons of 'lack of time'. While evaluators were explicitly instructed (in the Guide for Evaluators) to verify the gender issues and to make recommendations where deemed necessary, 'gender' was not an evaluation criterion to be marked in the evaluation process. Neither did the Guide for Evaluators under FP6 suggest anywhere that gender issues could/should (also) be considered by the evaluators under specific evaluation criteria as given in the Individual Assessment Forms, e.g. when assessing 'S&T excellence', or when the consortium / research team is assessed. When we turn to the implementation stage then, we found that one out of five Evaluation Summary Reports in the examined domains nevertheless contained critical remarks on how gender had been addressed in the project proposal. Such critical remarks give way to improvements in the project design, as these elements are supposed to be addressed during the negotiation between the EC and the applicants for the project to be eventually approved for funding. This proves that when attention to gender is structurally built into the programme design, clear effects can be and are effectively realised.

For the EC staff that had to facilitate the evaluation process, run contract negotiations and act as research project officers, the 'Vademecum' was the main guidance document. No capacity building actions were foreseen for these actors either. At the same time, these scientific project officers, EC staff whose role it is to monitor EU-funded projects, were found to have heavy workloads. In terms of staff resources, there has clearly been a problematic shortage to ensure an adequate implementation of the 'gender in research' policy decisions within the Research Directorate-General. Looking at the implementation stage, it appeared moreover that the internal administrative and software-based infrastructures were not flawless and also the electronic reporting systems for project holders were not functioning as they were expected to. As a result, compliance by project holders with their reporting obligations was frequently unmet, but ignored by scientific officers.

Lastly, the review has also shown that no provisions were foreseen for the independent observers, for the National Contact Points or for the Descartes Prize evaluators and juries, and this is reflected in the outcome of these actors' work.

The analysis of the actual implementation of measures has revealed a lack of or insufficient

intervention on the part of the actors, which can at least in part be explained by reservations and reluctance because of incapacity (and hence uncertainty) to take on gender-related responsibilities, by flexibility on the part of scientific officers towards the research community because electronic reporting facilities did not work adequately, also by lack of resources (notably time and knowledge) on the part of EC staff, rather than by resistance on behalf of these actors to the notion of gender equality itself. Especially considering there were no (or hardly any) 'incentives' in place for doing otherwise, the omission of gender responsibilities during the implementation process may not come as a surprise. Indeed, the structural provisions had not put in place any rewards for compliance or 'punishments' for non-compliance with gender-related 'rules'. For example, as gender was not a marked criterion in the evaluation of proposals, gender-sensitive proposals did not generally receive higher marks during the evaluation process; failure to comply with gender-related reporting on the part of project holders was more frequently than not ignored by scientific officers; independent observers did not generally assess the evaluation work from the point of view of gender equality policy in the Framework Programme; while a Gender Action Plan (GAP) was mandatory for the biggest projects (a seemingly 'hard incentive'), a few got approved for funding even though there was no GAP in their proposal; and although evaluation summary reports reflect a very uneven approach to gender issues no action was taken to remedy this situation. Non-action went largely undiscovered or unchallenged, mainly due to lack of accountability structures, rather than by lack of monitoring provisions. Indeed, while monitoring studies had been launched, their methodologies varied and the lessons learnt from the intermediate monitoring rounds were not taken up (as also set out in Chapter 7). Neither were the monitoring studies intended or conceived to serve as a means to track different actors' performances in terms of delivery upon their gender-related responsibilities. Rather, the focus of most studies was on the 'output' (statistics in terms of women's participation and assessments of the integration of gender in the content of the work), while there was no attention for how such outputs were linked to the actors who were to take up certain tasks.

As we could see, despite the structural shortcomings in the planning of FP6 as regards gender mainstreaming, efforts have been undertaken during the implementation stage by actors for whom there were no specific provisions foreseen (for example independent observers), as well as by others who attempted to take up their responsibilities but did so only with a partial understanding of what was to be addressed (notably focusing on women's participation). We can therefore assume that these actors duly wanted to perform their duties and thus also to contribute to the gender equality objective set by the European Commission. This argues against a 'real' resistance to gender issues on the part of the actors involved with the daily implementation of FP6. One can however still argue that the more fundamental resistance can be situated at the higher levels of the hierarchy, where the priorities are set and where decisions are taken about resources and actions. Indeed, as not all actors were equipped, as sufficient resources were clearly missing inside the Commission, and as the lessons from the monitoring studies were not taken on board to improve the process 'along the way' (for

example for the briefing of evaluators and independent observers and where the Descartes Prizes are concerned), there is at least a trace of possible resistance at the top.

Let us now sum up what this all says in relation to the research questions that deal with the issues set out earlier. This chapter clearly shows that a variety of elements have been at play in this case, pleading for a multi-causal understanding. Variability and unevenness have been identified both in the planning and in the implementation stage. Looking at the planning stage revealed a clear unevenness in the provisions that have been foreseen for the different actors. The implementation that followed showed variability in how the provisions have been used, as well as in the actions that were taken up by the different actors. This translated into unevenness of the results and an uneven contribution of the actions to the realisation of the two gender equality objectives: more efforts went towards increasing women's participation than to rendering the research itself gender-sensitive.

Lack of clarity in the conceptualisation of the gender equality goal has appeared not to be the main problem. Rather, a lack of understanding on the part of the actors as regards what was expected from them better explains why gender-related performances have been inadequate. As we have seen, where (some) action is taken, the attention seems to go to women's participation and less to the integration of gender in the work itself – suggesting that the former is regarded as easier to grasp, more 'accessible' in terms of understanding than 'gender in the content'. This has led to a shrinking of the approach to gender taken by the actors in the practice of the implementation.

As regards the conditions for effective gender mainstreaming, the case has not shown a particular effort or intention on the part of the Commission to question or address its own features. Only one reference to a need to change working cultures was found in a document addressed at the research community. In relation to condition two, the analysis has shown that the implementation of gender mainstreaming in FP6 has been addressed as a staged process. However, while the implementation *plan* was intended to be comprehensive, with structural provisions for various actors, it was not good enough as not all actors had been considered (e.g. not the independent observers). Neither were sufficient resources and means (expertise, time, functioning electronic reporting systems) available to ensure a good implementation. While gender monitoring studies provided for involvement of external gender experts, no specific incentives for good performance or sanctions for bad performance had been foreseen, and no accountability structures were put in place. As a consequence, the *actual implementation* was not so good either and inadequate actions were not corrected.

This chapter does not confirm that resistance to gender equality explains non-action, but points to other reasons than resistance to explain non-action or inadequate action. The main argument found against true resistance is that across the actors, visible efforts were undertaken, mainly to support women's participation in Framework Programme activities. Furthermore, actual performance has sometimes been better than could be expected in the absence of provisions (as was the case for the independent observers). Rather than resistance,

incapacity and uncertainty may be the main explanatory factors. The lack of resources, such as time and operational systems, has been critical, elements which seem to confirm the existence of institutional impediments to effective gender mainstreaming implementation (as we will see also further, notably in Chapter 7.). Last but not least, the absence of hard incentives has also been noticed, more specifically where the evaluation of proposals for funding is concerned as 'gender issues' were not to be marked as an evaluation criterion.

4. Women in European research: equal opportunities

The present chapter analyses the participation of women in FP6, both at the framework programme level and in the projects. The aim of this analysis is to verify the results of the efforts made under FP6 towards realising equal opportunities for women and men to participate in EU-funded research activities, set out from the start as one of the gender mainstreaming objectives. Looking at the interpretation of the meaning of gender equality in FP6, the previous chapter indicated that the goal of increasing women's participation in EU-funded research activities seemed to have been easier to understand and address than the other gender-related objective to render research gender-sensitive.

A closer analysis of women's participation will reveal variability and unevenness if and where these occurred, clarifying what exactly varies in gender mainstreaming implementation. This relates to the first research question of this work: where and when in the process did variability and unevenness occur? The present chapter also touches upon the fulfilment of the conditions for effective gender mainstreaming, more specifically the availability of accountability structures and of resources. Lastly, the present analysis will look at the influence local attitudes towards gender change have had on gender mainstreaming results.

4.1. Method and data

The section that follows sketches the policy background of the objective to increase women's participation in European research activities. It does so by tracing back in the official EU policy documents related to the European Union's research policy when and how increasing women's participation in research activities was mentioned and (seemingly) interpreted, up to the launch of FP6.

We then turn to the main data that forms the basis of the present chapter: the figures about women's participation. The third section in this chapter takes a closer look at the actual figures of women's participation in FP6 in the two domains that constitute the case: 'Science and Society' and SSH, both in FP structures and in projects. The figures that are presented here were collected from various sources: evaluation reports, lists with the names of members of committees / panels / groups / bodies (no sex-disaggregated figures could be provided about the composition of such groups³⁷), and direct enquiries with contact persons in the DG RTD. Using different methods of data gathering was necessary in order to make them as complete as possible. The next section broadens the analysis to other parts of FP6 and compares figures from FP6 to those from previous framework programmes, based on official Commission publications.

³⁷ Internet searches were performed on names in order to find out the persons' sex.

The findings from the European Research Area public consultation (organised by the European Commission in 2007, and made public on their website) relating to women's participation in research are reported upon in section five. These findings shed light on the reality 'on the ground', faced by female scientists in the workplace, and the difficulties to raise women's participation in European research in the absence of hard incentives.

4.2. Women's participation in European research: policy background

At the start of FP5 (which ran from 1998 till 2002), the European Commission states in its 1999 Communication 'Women and Science – Mobilising women to enrich European research' (European Commission, 1999), that: *"The Commission undertakes to make significant efforts to increase women's participation in Community research programmes; the overall objective is to achieve for women at least a 40% representation, on average throughout the 5th Framework Programme, in Marie Curie scholarships, advisory groups and assessment panels."*

It thus set the 40% target for women's participation in FP5, 'throughout' the Framework Programme.

In 2000, a Commission Decision was published in which this target of 40% of members of either sex in each expert group and committee was extended beyond the framework programme to all Commission activities (European Commission, 2000a).

Despite the 1999 Communication, or maybe because of the 2000 Decision, at later stages, it has been argued that the self-imposed formal 40% target in FP5 referred only to committees and panels, interpreting the above-quoted sentence as restricting the target to these groups rather than as inclusive of all activities in the Framework Programme (research, as well as mobility actions and programme management-related groups). For example, in the Commission Staff Working Paper 'Women and Science: the gender dimension as a leverage for reforming science' (European Commission, 2001c), it is written on page 10: *"In its Communication, the Commission stated that it would seek a 40% participation of women at all levels, in implementing and managing research programmes. This covers mainly Expert Advisory Groups, Expert Evaluation Panels and Monitoring Panels."*

Still, it has also been recognised that the target was 'expanded' to apply to the whole of the Framework Programme, including the projects. In its 'Gender Equality Report – the Sixth Framework Programme' (European Commission, 2008c), the Commission writes: *"The Commission's stated aim was to achieve at least a 40% representation of women in Marie Curie scholarships, advisory groups, assessment panels and monitoring panels. This target was subsequently expanded to include all groups, panels, committees and projects involved in the Framework Programme. The 40% target remained in place for FP6 and is currently in place for FP7."*³⁸

The above shows that different forces have been at work, that the gender equality goal has been

³⁸ For the documents mentioning the 40% target, see COM(1999) 76; 1999/C 201/01; 2000 European Parliament Resolution SEC(2000) 1973; SEC 2005 370; Council Conclusions on Family-Friendly Scientific Careers, 2871st COMPETITIVENESS (INTERNAL MARKET, INDUSTRY and RESEARCH) Council meeting Brussels, 29 and 30 May 2008.

interpreted differently by different actors, that different positions have been taken within the EC and that there has been variability over time in the policy approach, caused by different actors' pulling and pushing.

At the March 2002 Barcelona European Council, around the time of the launch of Framework Programme 6 (which ran from 2002 till 2006), the EU agreed that overall spending on R&D in the Union should be increased with the aim of approaching 3% of GDP by 2010. The issue of human resources in general and of women in particular in R&D was raised in this context, notably in the Communication 'More Research for Europe – towards 3% of GDP' (European Commission, 2002) which underlined the fact that Member States and the research community need to be aware of the risk that a lack of sufficient human resources in R&D constitutes a bottleneck to the attainment of the 3% objective. This is further developed in the Communication 'Investing in research: an action plan for Europe' (European Commission, 2003b), which states: *"Thus, the adjustment of human resources to the prospective needs for research and innovation will imply combined and greater efforts from all the stakeholders in order to: [...] make research more attractive to various categories of the population³⁹, especially women; and reduce losses at the various stages of education and during the research career, including at the most experienced stage."*

The Commission's Communication 'Researchers in the European Research Area: one profession, multiple careers' (European Commission, 2003a) of 2003 states (on page 12): *"the under-representation of women in R&D must be tackled if optimal use is to be made of human resources devoted to research. Increasing the talent pool of women researchers will thus be critical in reaching the 3% objective."* It further recognises that *"the under-representation of women in R&D is the result of different complex factors, which combine as subtle, but cumulative, forms of discrimination, and as such call for different types of action"* and herewith the existence of mechanisms leading to structural inequalities between the sexes.

The European Commission thus draws the attention to the phenomenon of the 'leaky pipeline', identified already in the ETAN report (European Commission 2000), by which women tend to decrease in disproportionate numbers as they approach the top of the academic career ladder. To be able to remedy this situation, which is recognised as the consequence of a combination of factors, the Commission states that a mix of different measures is needed. *"Recruiting, retaining and promoting women in research requires innovative practices in terms of performance evaluation and rewarding systems. In order to be attractive to women researchers, careers in R&D should cease to appear as being in conflict with having a family, a conflict that continues to apply almost exclusively to women. Similarly, women need to be recognised for their achievements and not be put under excessive pressure to outperform male colleagues. Networking and mentoring are also important mechanisms to support women researchers in*

³⁹ 'Other' categories referred to include, apart from women, young people.

their careers. Business enterprises and research organisations should promote good practices, such as flexible working time, dual track careers, “girls days”, etc.”

The European Commission itself undertakes several actions, among which the development of the “European Researcher’s Charter”, a framework for the career management for human resources in R&D, and the “Code of conduct for the recruitment of researchers” based on best practise, to improve recruitment methods. Both these documents were published as one publication in 2005 (European Commission, 2005a) as a common, albeit voluntary framework for Member States, funders and employers of researchers. It includes various references to gender, precisely by addressing the mechanisms underlying structural inequalities. The overarching aim put forward for the implementation of the measures proposed in both documents is the attainment of the Lisbon and Barcelona objectives, which may be hampered by a potential shortage of researchers.

The fact that the 40% target for women’s participation was maintained also in FP6 has been a logical consequence of the processes that had been on-going at the policy level, albeit that the ‘gender equality in research’ objective had been ‘bent’⁴⁰ towards the so-called Barcelona objective that by 2010 overall spending on research and development had to be 3% of GDP.

The Vademecum (European Commission, 2003c) states in respect to the 40% target : *“When forming the [evaluation] panels, scientific officers should pay attention to this target. In 2001, there were 27% female experts, in 2002 only about 23%. There is a need to progress towards 40%. This also requires an increase of the number of women in the EMM⁴¹ database. Directorates should raise the attention of their stakeholders (programme committees, NCP’s, EAG’s, etc.) on the need to encourage women’s applications to be expert-evaluator.”*

While the above has shown that there has been variability over time in the position taken towards the promotion of women’s participation in the framework programmes, the 40% target has remained intact and is nowadays explicitly recognised as applicable to all activities of the framework programme, including the projects.

4.3. Women’s participation in FP6 ‘Science and Society’ and Social Sciences and Humanities fields

This section analyses the actual figures of women’s participation in FP6 in the domains of ‘Science and Society’ and SSH, both in FP structures and in projects.

⁴⁰ The concept of ‘bending gender equality’ is used here as it is proposed by Lombardo, Meier and Verloo (2009).

⁴¹ EMM stands for ‘Experts Management Module’

4.3.1. *Science and Society*

Women's participation in Framework Programme structures

The target of at least 40 % female participation has been met in nearly all the cases.

The Advisory Group⁴² on 'Science and Society' counted 7 women (39%) and 11 men (61%) in 2005, but presented a more equal balance between men and women (nine men and ten women respectively) by the end of FP6⁴³.

As regards the experts participating in the evaluation of proposals (see table 4.1), there were in total 570 experts involved, of which 289 (51 %) were women. This percentage has been above the 40% threshold, except for the third, 8th, 9th and 15th call (where women represented respectively only 32%, 38%, 38% and only 31% of the evaluation experts).

The evaluation panels of calls that specifically focussed on women⁴⁴ had a significantly higher share of women (84% on average across these calls, against 48% on average across the other calls). This was especially striking for calls 10 and 17 (Women and Science), as a result of which the difficulty was noted by independent observers to ensure a gender balance among the evaluators. This concern can be regarded as quite remarkable considering the fact gender imbalances in favour of men generally are not pointed out.

Looking per year, a decrease in the share of women in evaluation panels for Science and Society can be noted from 2003 to 2005, while 2006 has known again an increase: in 2003, 55% of the evaluation panels was female; 49% in 2004; 44 % in 2005, and again 54% in 2006.

In the Programme Committee⁴⁵, composed of national representatives, 49 % of the representatives were female⁴⁶.

In September 2005, 47% of professional staff (A-grade) in the Science and Society Directorate of the DG Research was female. In April 2007, after the restructuring of the Directorate, the A-grade staff in the newly formed Directorate L 'Science, Economy and Society' consisted for 49% of women.

For the 17 evaluation sessions that were (according to the available information) attended by independent observers⁴⁷, the Commission used ten different persons of which five were women, who together assessed six sessions. This results in 35% of the sessions having been observed by a female independent observer. Two men acted as independent observer for four different evaluation sessions each.

⁴² The Advisory Groups (twelve under FP6) are composed of external experts and give the Commission advice on the overall strategy to be followed in the development of the various research activities, as well as on the creation of the European Research Area (ERA). See for more information: <http://cordis.europa.eu/fp6/eags.htm> (accessed on 3 February 2009).

⁴³ The list of members of the 'Science and Society' Advisory Group is available at: ftp://ftp.cordis.europa.eu/pub/fp6/docs/eag_science.pdf (accessed on 3 February 2009).

⁴⁴ Notably call 6 'European Platform of Women Scientists' and calls 10 and 17 'Women and Science'.

⁴⁵ Basis: list of members of 09-09-2005.

⁴⁶ When aggregating 'representatives, experts and observers', the share of women remains 49%.

⁴⁷ Not all evaluation sessions of proposals had independent observers present. Notably for calls 3, 8 and 12 (Descartes Prizes) there were no independent observers. Neither did there seem to have been an independent observer for the evaluation sessions of the first and second cut-off date of call 1; and for call 4. One independent observer assessed the evaluations sessions held for the fourth cut-off date of the first call and for the sixth call, as these sessions ran in parallel.

Table 4.1: Sex balance of evaluation panels, calls ‘Science and Society’

Call	Programme Area	Male	Female	% Female
FP6-2002-science and society-1	Selected topics : horizontal call	22	36	62%
First cut-off date		5	6	55%
Second cut-off date		6	6	50%
Third cut-off date		5	10	66%
Fourth cut-off date		6	14	70%
FP6-2002-science and society-2	European Science Week Initiative	8	12	60%
FP6-2002-science and society-3	René Descartes Prize 2003	19	9	32%
FP6-2003-science and society-4	Deepening the understanding of ethical problems	3	6	67%
FP6-2003-science and society-5	Science Education in Europe	8	10	55%
FP6-2003-science and society-6	European Platform of Women Scientists	0	3	100%
FP6-2003-science and society-7	Governance, scientific advice, outreach and communication	17	16	48%
FP6-2003-science and society-8	René Descartes Prize 2004	31	19	38%
Research Prize		17	8	32%
Communication Prize		14	11	44%
FP6-2004-science and society-9	Research into ethics	16	10	38%
FP6-2004-science and society-10	Women and Science 2004	2	16	89%
FP6-2004-science and society-11	Science education and careers 2004	11	10	48%
FP6-2004-science and society-12	René Descartes Prizes 2005	36	31	46%
Research Prize		20	15	47%
Communication Prize		16	16	50%
FP6-2005-science and society-13	European Science Events; ‘Science and Society’ beyond FP6	10	10	50%
FP6-2005-science and society-14	Risk governance and ethics	18	12	40%
FP6-2005-science and society-15	Science Communication	9	4	31%
FP6-2005-science and society-16	Science education and careers 2005	12	11	48%
FP6-2005-science and society-17	Women and Science	5	17	77%
FP6-2005-science and society-18	René Descartes Prizes 2006	33	28	45%
Research Prize		15	15	50%
Communication Prize		18	13	42%
FP6-2005-science and society-19	Bringing research closer to society; Promoting science and scientific culture	13	18	58%
FP6-2005-science and society-20	Science shops	8	11	58%
Total ‘Science and Society’ calls		281	289	51%
Total gender specific calls (calls 6, 10 and 17)		7	36	84%
Total all non-gender specific calls		274	253	48%

For the Descartes Research Prizes (calls 3, 8, 12 and 18), the Grand Juries who selected the laureates from among the finalists - who were pre-selected by independent experts – comprised between 8 and 20 members, with a proportion of women that only in the last call met the 40% target:

- Call 3: 8 members, of which 3 women (38%)
- Call 8: 14 members, of which 4 women (29%)
- Call 12: 14 members, of which 3 women (21%)
- Call 18: 20 members, of which 11 women (55%)

For the Descartes Communication Prizes (calls 8, 12 and 18), the final selection of the winners was done by the panel presidents. While for Call 12 the sex breakdown of the panel presidents was not given, the share of women in these panels for the other calls has been satisfactory:

- Call 8: of the 12 panel presidents, 5 were women (42%)
- Call 18: 6 out of the 12 panel presidents were women (50%)

Women's participation as coordinators in projects

The tables 4.2 and 4.3 give an overview of the key figures regarding the sex of project coordinators in 'Science and Society' projects. These figures result from all calls published under Science and Society, excluding the calls for Descartes prizes which have been analysed separately. The gender specific calls (call 6, 10 and 17) appear in table 4.3 in italics.

Table 4.2: Key figures for Science and Society – Gender-specific and non-gender-specific calls (excluding Descartes calls)

Key figures	Total gender specific calls	Total non-gender specific calls
Evaluated proposals	150	812
Female coordinators in evaluated proposals (%)	127 (85%)	262 (32%)
Proposals passing all thresholds	63	268
Ranked proposals ⁴⁸	31	141
Female coordinators in ranked proposals (%)	29 (94%)	44 (31%)
Contracts signed	27	125
Female coordinators in contracts signed (%)	25 (93%)	37 (30%)

⁴⁸ As explained in section 3.3. above, ranked proposals are those proposals that have been evaluated as passing all thresholds set for the evaluation, ranked in the order of evaluation marks obtained, whereby those with the highest marks are put on top of the list. Only the highest ranked proposals are invited for contract negotiations insofar the budget foreseen for the call allows.

The overall percentage of female coordinators in evaluated proposals across these calls is 40%. This figure hides important differences among the various calls. Whereas call 6 (European Platform for Women Scientists) and calls 10 and 17 (Women and Science) reach an impressive 86%, 82% and 89% of female co-ordinators respectively (on average 85% across these calls), the share of female co-ordinators is much lower in other calls (only 32% on average). In call 14 it is only 21%, 23% in call 2, and in call 20 it is 25%.

Table 4.3: Key figures for Science and Society – all calls (excluding Descartes calls)

Call	Evaluated proposals	Female coord. in evaluated proposals (%)	Proposals passing all thresholds	Ranked proposals	Female coord. in ranked proposals (%)	Contracts signed	Female coord. in contracts signed (%)
1	120	42 (35%)	38	30	14 (47%)	18	8 (44%)
2	30	7 (23%)	8	8	1 (13%)	8	1 (13%)
4	15	5 (33%)	7	7	4 (57%)	7	4 (57%)
5	32	10 (31%)	8	5	0 (0%)	5	0 (0%)
6	21	18 (86%)	1	1	1 (100%)	1	1 (100%)
7	104	30 (29%)	36	15	1 (7%)	15	1 (7%)
9	43	12 (28%)	26	10	4 (40%)	10	4 (40%)
10	68	56 (82%)	31	11	11 (100%)	11	11 (100%)
11	111	42 (38%)	23	10	3 (30%)	9	3 (33%)
13	30	13 (43%) ⁴⁹	12	6	2 (33%)	6	2 (33%)
14	62	13 (21%)	33	14	3 (21%)	14	3 (21%)
15	49	19 (39%)	8	4	1 (25%)	4	1 (25%)
16	60	26 (43%)	17	10	4 (40%)	10	4 (40%)
17	61	53 (87%)	31	19	17 (89%)	15	13 (87%)
19	92	27 (29%)	25	18	6 (21%)	15	6 (40%)
20	64	16 (25%)	27	4	0 (0%)	4	0 (0%)
Total	962	389 (40%)	331	172	73 (42%)	152	62 (41%)

One can furthermore observe that the share of female co-ordinators among the ranked proposals is 42%, slightly higher than the initial 40% among the evaluated proposals, and 41% among the contracts signed. This indicates that women and men have been (almost) equally successful with their proposals under the Science and Society calls in FP6.

Success rates were calculated for women coordinators, considering all proposals that were retained for funding as a basis. These success rates were calculated overall, per call and per

⁴⁹ Female participation in 'submitted' proposals (31) rather than in 'evaluated proposals' (30).

instrument. Across all calls (Call 1 to 20, excluding the Descartes calls), the success rates of female and male co-ordinators have been the same: 16 %. However, success rates vary significantly per call, e.g. women's success rate has been up to 80% against 40% for men in call 4 which dealt with 'deepening the understanding of ethical problems,' whereas women's success rate has been zero against 23% for men in call 5 which dealt with 'science education in Europe.' Women's average success rate in the gender specific calls (calls 6, 10 and 17) has been 20%, against 9% for men in these calls.

Table 4.4 gives an overview of the success rates of female and male coordinators per funding instrument and per call in absolute figures and in percentages. The ' _F' indicates the number of projects financed, out of the total number of proposals submitted (the preceding column). The basis of this table is the number of contracts signed.

Looking at the type of instrument, women remain significantly more successful than men for STREPs, with a 30% higher success rate (43% against 13% for men). For CA (Coordination Action), the success rate of men is higher than that of female coordinators (21% against 13%). For SSA (Specific Support Action), the success rates of women and men are almost the same (14% and 15% respectively).

Table 4.4: Overview table: success rates of female (F) and male (M) coordinators – Science and Society

Call	F/M coord	STRP	STRP_F	CA	CA_F	SSA	SSA_F	TOT	TOT_F	Success rate
FP6-2002-Science and Society-1	F	0	0	0	0	3	3	3	3	100%
	M	0	0	1	1	5	0	6	1	17%
FP6-2002-Science and Society-1	F	0	0	0	0	7	1	7	1	14%
	M	0	0	1	0	9	4	10	4	40%
	n.k.	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0%
FP6-2002-Science and Society-1	F	0	0	3	1	8	3	11	4	36%
	M	0	0	5	0	15	1	20	1	5%
FP6-2002-Science and Society-1	F	0	0	6	0	15	0	21	0	0%
	M	0	0	10	0	31	4	41	4	10%
FP6-2002-Science and Society-2	F	0	0	1	0	6	1	7	1	14%
	M	0	0	4	0	20	7	24	7	29%
	n.k.	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0%
FP6-2003-Science and Society-4	F	3	2	2	2	0	0	5	4	80%
	M	10	3	0	0	0	0	10	3	30%
FP6-2003-Science and Society-5	F	0	0	5	0	5	0	10	0	0%
	M	0	0	6	2	16	3	22	5	23%

Table 4.4: Continued

Call	F/M coord	STRP	STRP_F	CA	CA_F	SSA	SSA_F	TOT	TOT_F	Success rate
FP6-2003- Science and Society-6	F M	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	18 2	1 0	18 2	1 0	6% 0%
FP6-2003- Science-and- Society-7	F M	0 0	0 0	4 13	1 4	26 61	0 10	30 74	1 14	3% 19%
FP6-2004- Science-and- Society-9	F M	3 16	2 1	3 10	0 4	6 5	2 1	12 31	4 6	33% 19%
FP6-2004- Science-and- Society-10	F M	12 3	4 0	1 0	0 0	43 9	7 0	56 12	11 0	20% 0%
FP6-2004- Science-and- Society-11	F M	0 0	0 0	7 14	1 0	35 55	2 6	42 69	3 6	7% 9%
FP6-2005- Science-and- Society-13	F M	0 0	0 0	2 2	0 1	11 16	2 3	13 18	2 4	15% 22%
FP6-2005- Science-and- Society-14	F M	5 16	2 2	4 20	0 6	4 13	1 3	13 49	3 11	23% 22%
FP6-2005- Science-and- Society-15	F M	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	19 30	1 3	19 30	1 3	5% 10%
FP6-2005- Science-and- Society-16	F M	0 0	0 0	4 10	0 3	22 24	4 3	26 34	4 6	15% 18%
FP6-2005- Science-and- Society-17	F M	0 0	0 0	9 6	1 2	44 2	12 0	53 8	13 2	25% 25%
FP6-2005- Science-and- Society-19	F M	0 0	0 0	2 11	1 1	25 55	5 8	27 66	6 9	22% 14%
FP6-2005- Science-and- Society-20	F M	0 0	0 0	1 3	0 0	15 45	0 4	16 48	0 4	0% 8%
Total F coordinators		23	10	54	7	312	45	389	62	
Total M coordinators		45	6	116	24	413	60	574	90	
Success rate F coordinators		43%		13%		14%		16%		
Success rate M coordinators		13%		21%		15%		16%		

Women's participation as participants in projects

The absolute and relative figures for the participation of women (coordinators as well as consortium partners) in proposals evaluated and retained for funding are given in table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Sex of participants in proposals evaluated and retained for funding under all calls for Science and Society (excluding Descartes calls)

Call	Number of evaluated proposals	Total number of participants in evaluated proposals	Female participants in evaluated proposals (%)	Number of ranked proposals	Number of participants in ranked proposals	Female participants in ranked proposals (%)
1	120	1366	445 (33%)	30	301	129 (43%)
2	30	225	56 (25%)	8	41	3 (7%)
4	15	119	34 (29%)	7	60	21 (35%)
5	32	249	75 (30%)	5	69	17 (25%)
6	21	85	68 (80%)	1	1	1 (100%)
7	104	638	187 (29%)	15	139	30 (22%)
9	43	297	85 (29%)	10	87	16 (18%)
10	68	335	261 (78%)	11	73	63 (86%)
11	111	568	205 (36%)	10	67	26 (39%)
13	30	156	55 (35%)	6	69	20 (29%)
14	62	464	146 (31%)	14	107	33 (31%)
15	49	198	76 (38%)	4	26	12 (46%)
16	60	316	147 (47%)	10	87	42 (48%)
17	61	315	249 (79%)	19	94	77 (82%)
19	92	509	163 (32%)	18	105	35 (33%)
20	64	231	67 (29%)	4	19	5 (26%)
Total	962	6071	2319 (38%)	172	1345	530 (39%)

The overall percentage of female participants in proposals across these calls is 38%, which is slightly lower than the overall share of female co-ordinators (40%). Again, differences among the various calls can be noted: the share of women participating in proposals submitted under call 6 (European Platform for Women Scientists) and calls 10 and 17 (Women and Science) is much higher: 80%, 78% and 79% female participants respectively. The share of female participants is lowest in call 2 (European Science Week Initiative): 25%. Across the calls, women's participation rates are highest in the calls covering women-specific themes and lower on the other themes.

The overall share of female participants in the proposals retained for funding (39%) is about the same as the share of women participating in proposals submitted and evaluated (38%),

confirming that success rates for women and men are the same across these Science and Society calls.

Descartes Prizes

Calls for *Descartes prizes* were analysed separately. This concerns four of the twenty calls published under the Science and Society are (Calls 3, 8, 12 and 18).

Table 4.6 provides the absolute and relative figures of women's participation as co-ordinator, or in the case of the Communication Prizes as 'author'.

Table 4.6: Women's participation (F) as co-ordinator or author in Descartes Calls – in absolute numbers and in percentage

Call		Number of proposals	Number of finalists ⁵²	Number of laureates / winners
Call 3 – Research	Number	36	8	2
	F coordinators	6 (17%)	2 (25%)	1 (50%)
Call 8 – Research	Number	28	8	2
	F coordinators	4 (14%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Call 8 – Comm.	Number	47	19	5
	F coordinators	?	1 (5%)	0 (0%)
Call 12 – Research	Number	85 ⁵³	14	5
	F coordinators	9 (12%)	1 ⁵⁴ (7%)	0 (0%)
Call 12 – Comm.	Number	63	23	5
	F coordinators	9 (15%) ⁵⁵	?	1 (20%)
Call 18 – Research	Number	65 ⁵⁶	13	3
	F coordinators	5 (8%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Call 18 – Comm.	Number	80	33	5
	F coordinators	21 (24%) ⁵⁷	?	2 (33%) ⁵⁸

For the Research Prizes, the percentage of submitted projects co-ordinated by women is decreasing over time. For the four calls, the proportion of projects coordinated by women is 12%, a relatively low figure. Looking at the laureates, only one of the twelve research prizes was

⁵² For this report, 'finalists' is defined as those projects that make it to the final stage of selection by a Grand Jury after a pre-selection by a panel composed by the Commission. It is to be noted however that since the introduction in 2005 (Call 12) of a small monetary prize for five non-winners, the Commission uses the term 'finalists' for those research projects that make it to the final stage, are not selected as laureates, but do receive a small monetary prize.

⁵³ There were eight ineligible proposals, of which seven did not specify their project coordinator. The female participation is therefore calculated on 78 proposals rather than on the total number of 85.

⁵⁴ This one project coordinated by a woman was not selected as winner, nor for a small monetary prize.

⁵⁵ This percentage is calculated on 60 proposals because three proposals (ineligibles) did not specify a nominee.

⁵⁶ There were 6 ineligible proposals, of which four did not specify their project coordinator. Female participation is therefore calculated on 61.

⁵⁷ Some projects involved two authors. This is the reason why the percentage calculated is based on 88 authors.

⁵⁸ This percentage is calculated on a total of 6 laureates as one of the projects with a female winner was authored by both a man and a woman.

granted to a woman (8 %). The success rate of female co-ordinators for the Descartes Research Prize is 4 %, while the success rate of projects co-ordinated by men is 6 %.

In 2005, a small monetary prize was introduced for five non-winners from among the short-listed proposals. Both in 2005 (call 12) and in 2006 (call 18), not only were there no female coordinators among the laureates of the Research Prize, also among the winners of the small monetary prize there were no women. For the Communication Prize, there were two women among the five winners of the small monetary prize in 2005, but none in 2006. None of Descartes Prizes nor of the small monetary prizes were awarded to an initiative dealing with a gender-specific topic.

Looking at the total of Descartes Prizes (both for research and communication), four of the 27 prizes were awarded to women (8 %). This share is significantly below the average proportion of women among the coordinators/authors (15%). This may be the indication of a gender-bias in the selection of winners, which can possibly be explained by the fact that the guidance notes for evaluators for these prizes did not contain any reference to gender whatsoever (as we have seen in the previous chapter, section 3.6.).

Table 4.7: Women's participation in consortia in Call 3, Call 8, Call 12 and Call 18

Call	Number of participants	In total number of proposals	In number of finalists ⁵⁹	In number of laureates / winners
Call 3 – Research	Total of which F	906 325 (36%)	272 78 (29%)	49 8 (16%)
Call 8 – Research	Total of which F	148 22 (15%)	? ?	13 0 (0%)
Call 12 – Research	Total of which F	469 52 (11%)	76 12 (16%)	27 2 (7%)
Call 18 – Research	Total of which F	407 58 (14%)	86 11 (13%)	27 3 (11%)

Table 4.7 provides the absolute and relative figures of women's participation in consortia submitting proposals for Descartes Research Prizes. It can be observed that the share of women participating in projects submitted (overall 24%) has decreased since 2003, but remains considerably higher than the share of women participating in award-winning projects (11% across the four calls). Again, this may be the indication of a gender-bias in the selection of winners. Especially in call 8, it is concerning to see that the winning projects were all-male.

⁵⁹ For this report, 'finalists' is defined as those projects that make it to the final stage of selection by a Grand Jury after a pre-selection by a panel composed by the Commission. It is to be noted however that since the introduction in 2005 (Call 12) of a small monetary prize for five non-winners, the Commission uses the term 'finalists' for those research projects that make it to the final stage, are not selected as laureates, but do receive a small monetary prize.

The above review has shown that throughout FP6, the Descartes Prizes have underperformed in terms of gender mainstreaming efforts and results. This consistent underperformance has been signalled in the various reports resulting from the three ‘monitoring rounds’ that were undertaken in the context of the ‘gender monitoring study’ covering the Science and Society area. However, it appears that no remediating actions have been undertaken. This finding can be regarded as an element of indirect evidence (referring to section 2.6.) indicating that the local attitudes towards gender change in the unit in charge of these Prizes may have been unfavourable under FP6.

4.3.2. *Social Sciences and Humanities (Priority 7)*

Women’s participation in Framework Programme structures

Priority 7 shows positive results as regards the target of at least 40 % female participation. This target has (nearly) been met in two of the three cases:

- The Advisory Group for Priority 7 counted 5 women (25%) and 15 men (75%) in 2005, but evolved to 5 women (33%) and 10 men (67%) by the end of FP6⁶⁰.
- In the Programme Committee⁶¹, composed of national representatives, 39 % of the representatives were female⁶².
- The evaluation of the proposals submitted under the Priority 7 calls has been undertaken by a total of 578 experts, of which 242 (42%) were women.
- In September 2005, 48% of professional staff (A grade) in the DG Research responsible for Priority 7 was female.
- Four independent observers were involved in the six evaluation sessions run for Priority 7⁶³, of which two were women (50%). Both women observed the sessions that were run in parallel (CIT-1 and CIT-2; and CIT-5 and CIT-6).

Table 4.8: Sex balance of evaluation panels, ‘Priority 7’ (CIT1 to CIT6)

Call	Male	Female	% Female
FP6-2002-citizens-1	32	26	45%
FP6-2002-citizens-2	61	34	36%
FP6-2002-citizens-3	98	63	39%
FP6-2004-citizens-4	119	89	43%
FP6-2004-citizens-5			
FP6-2004-citizens-6			
CIT-4 second stage	24	29	55%
Total	334	242	42%

⁶⁰ The composition of the Advisory Group on Social Sciences and Humanities can be accessed at: ftp://ftp.cordis.europa.eu/pub/fp6/docs/social_science_324_en.pdf

⁶¹ Basis : list of members of 09-09-2005.

⁶² When aggregating representatives and experts, the share of women is 38 %.

⁶³ The sessions for Citizens-1 and Citizens-2, as well as for the first stage of Citizens-4, Citizens-5 and Citizens-6 were run in parallel.

Women's participation as co-ordinators of projects

There have been two calls for Priority 7, each consisting of three parts. The calls addressed the variety of eligible themes of Priority 7, while the parts addressed different funding instruments⁶⁴. In total, 787 proposals have been submitted under these two calls for Priority 7. Of these, 27 % were co-ordinated by a woman. The highest share of female co-ordinators was reached under the second call. Both for the second stage of CIT4 and for CIT6, the share of female coordinators reached 38 %.

These figures remain significantly below the average share of women among PhD graduates in 2003 in the EU25 in the fields of 'Humanities and Arts' (51.4%) and of 'Social Sciences, Business and Law' (43.1%) (European Commission, 2006c).

Table 4.9: Key figures for call 1 of 'Priority 7' (in absolute number and in percentage)

	Total	CIT-1	CIT-2	CIT-3	Total Call 1	CIT-4 ⁶⁵	CIT-5	CIT-6	Total Call 2
Proposals submitted	787	64	194	182	440	34	281	32	347
Female coord. in submitted proposals (%)	208 (27%)	13 (20%)	60 (31%)	39 (22%)	112 (25%)	13 (38%)	71 (25%)	12 (38%)	96 (28%)
Contracts signed	140	5	39	15	59	14	52	15	81
Contracts signed, with female co-ordinator	40 (29%)	2 (40%)	12 (32%)	3 (27%)	17 (29%)	4 (29%)	13 (25%)	6 (40%)	23 (28%)

These figures show that the share of female co-ordinators among the successful proposals is 29%, almost equal to the initial 27% among the submitted proposals. This leads to the conclusion that female co-ordinators have been just slightly more successful than men under these Priority 7 calls⁶⁶. The share of female co-ordinators among the signed contracts is highest for CIT1 (which was open only to the biggest projects) and for CIT6 (only for smaller projects): 40%, whereas they accounted for only 20% among the proposals submitted under CIT1.

⁶⁴ STREPS and CAs are the smaller projects, in scope, duration, budget and requirements as to number of partners in the consortium. As an indication, in SSH, the community contribution in such project ranged between 0.6 and 1.2 million euro. IPs and NoEs are the largest projects, with community contributions ranging approximately from 3.0 to 4.0 million euro in SSH and a duration of up to five years.

⁶⁵ Only in stage 2

⁶⁶ It should be pointed out that these figures need to be interpreted with care because absolute numbers are relatively low.

Success rates were calculated for women and men coordinators, considering all proposals which resulted in signed contracts as a basis. These success rates were calculated overall, per part of the call and per instrument⁶⁷. Across Priority 7, the success rate of female co-ordinators has been 19% and of men 17%.

Figure 4.1 shows the success rates for female and male co-ordinators for the six parts of the two calls under Priority 7 (based on signed contracts)⁶⁸.

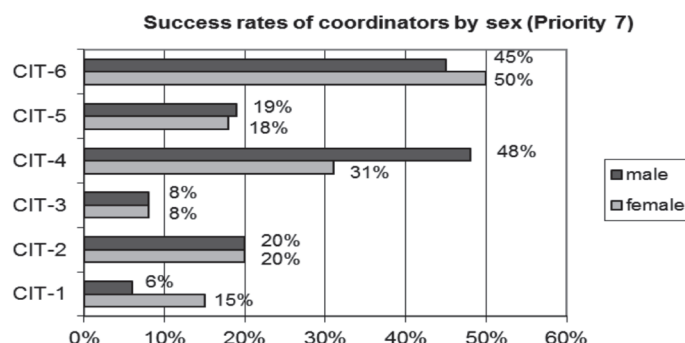


Figure 4.1: Success rates of female and male co-ordinators under Priority 7 (base: contracts signed)

The success rates per instrument were calculated, using the ‘contracts signed’ as a basis. The table 4.10 shows the results of this exercise, comparing the number of proposals submitted with those financed (‘-F’). The difference in success rate between men and women is apparently highest for STREPs and CAs – as was also the case in ‘Science and Society’. One must however be careful with the interpretation of this observation, not only because the data obtained has been incomplete (for STREPS and CAs, the success rates could only be calculated for the first call of Priority 7 as the necessary data relating to CIT5 was missing), but also because the absolute numbers underlying these figures remain relatively small.

⁶⁷ For STREPS and CAs, the success rates could only be calculated for the first call (CIT2), as the data necessary to calculate the success rates per instrument for the second call of Priority 7 (CIT5) were not obtained.

⁶⁸ CIT4 proposals had to go through a two-stage evaluation (for IPs and NoEs). Results for CIT4 are based on the second stage of the evaluation, figures for the first stage not being available.

Table 4.10: Success rates of female (F) and male (M) co-ordinators per instrument under Priority 7 (proposals submitted and financed)

		IP	IP -	NoE	NoE -	STRP	STRP -	CA	CA -	SSA	SSA -	Total	Total
		F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	Prop	Fin
CIT-1	F	7	1	6	1							13	2
	M	35	1	16	2							51	3
	Total	42	2	22	3							64	5
CIT-2	F					53	14	7	1			60	15
	M					118	18	16	4			134	22
	n.k.					0	1	0	1			0	2
	Total					171	33	23	6			194	39
CIT-3	F	30	2	8	1							38	3
	M	88	4	56	8							144	12
	Total	118	6	64	9							182	15
CIT-4	F	12	4	1	0							13	4
	M	69	8	16	2							85	10
	Total	81	12	17	2							98	14
CIT-5	F											0	0
	M											0	0
	Total					238	44	42	8			280	52
CIT-6	F									12	6	12	6
	M									20	9	20	9
	Total									32	15	32	15
Total female coordinators		49	7	15	2	53	14	7	1	12	6	136	30
Total male coordinators		192	13	88	12	118	18	16	4	20	9	434	56
Success rate F coordinators			14%		13%		26%		14%		50%		22%
Success rate M coordinators			7%		14%		15%		25%		45%		13%

Women's participation as participants in projects

The absolute and relative figures for the participation of women in proposals submitted and retained for funding are given in the table 4.11.

The overall percentage of female participants in proposals across the three parts of call 1 is 26%, but rises to 32% in the second call. This share is relatively consistent across the three parts of call 1, as well as for CIT5 and CIT6. However, the share of women participating in proposals under CIT4 is significantly higher. This can be explained by the fact that the CIT4 call included for the first time a gender specific topic for IPs and NoEs (7.1.2 'Gender and

Citizenship in a multicultural Europe'⁶⁹) in response to which large gender studies consortia submitted proposals.

When looking at the proposals retained for funding, the participation share of women is maintained overall, although for CIT4 quite a significant drop-out of women can be noted comparing submitted proposals with contracts signed. The same explanation as given above is valid: because only two IPs for the gender specific topic were contracted (as also envisaged at the time of the call publication), a high number of female participants were 'unsuccessful'.

Table 4.11: Statistics on sex of participants for 'Priority 7'

	Total	CIT1	CIT2	CIT3	Total Call 1	CIT4⁷⁰	CIT5	CIT6	Total Call 2
Number of proposals submitted	787	64	194	182	440	34	281	32	347
Total number of participants in submitted proposals	10529	1448	1742	4050	7240	608	2513	168	3289
Female participants in submitted proposals (%)	2969 (28%)	382 (27%)	523 (30%)	1009 (25%)	1914 (26%)	284 (47%)	725 (29%)	46 (27%)	1055 (32%)
Number of contracts signed	140	5	39	15	59	14	52	15	81
Number of participants in contracts signed	1912	160	387	520	1067	227	523	95	845
Female participants in contracts signed (%)	540 (28%)	41 (26%)	128 (33%)	118 (23%)	287 (27%)	87 (38%)	144 (28%)	22 (23%)	253 (30%)

The overall success rate of female participants in Priority 7 is 18%, equalling men's success rate (also 18%). The differences in success rates between female and male participants for the individual parts within Priority 7 vary however, as can be seen in figure 4.2. Whereas women's success rate exceeded that of men in CIT2, men's success rate was significantly higher than women's in CIT4 and CIT6. For CIT4, figures relate to the second stage of the evaluation.

⁶⁹ Cfr. the Priority 7 Work Programme 2004-2006

⁷⁰ Only in stage 2.

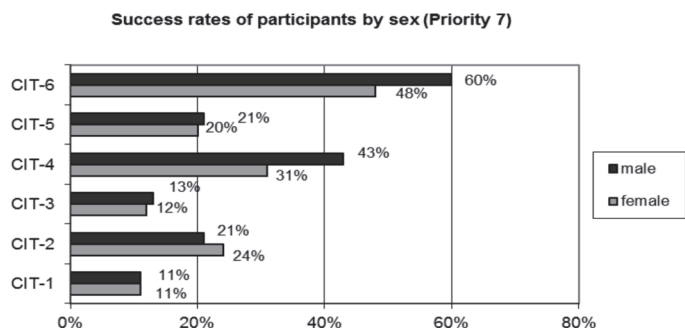


Figure 4.2: Success rates of female and male participants in Priority 7 (base = contracts signed)

4.4. Women's participation across FP6 and across Framework Programmes

A general overview of statistics on women's participation in FP6, and across the different Framework Programmes can be found in the European Commission's Gender Equality Report - Sixth Framework Programme, published in October 2008 (European Commission, 2008c). In this report, the European Commission points out the positive impact of setting a quantitative target on women's participation. While little data is available for FP4, an overview of statistics over the years (as graphically represented in figure 4.3) shows clearly that setting the 40% target in 1999 correlates with an increase in the number of women involved in FP5 and in FP6: the percentage of women in groups, panels and committees has steadily increased since 1999. Women's average participation rate in FP-related committees and panels, approximately 26% in 2006 (European Commission 2008:5) is however lower than the overall percentage of women researchers recorded in Europe in 2006 (30%), as revealed in She Figures 2009 (Etzkowitz & Kemelgor, 2001).

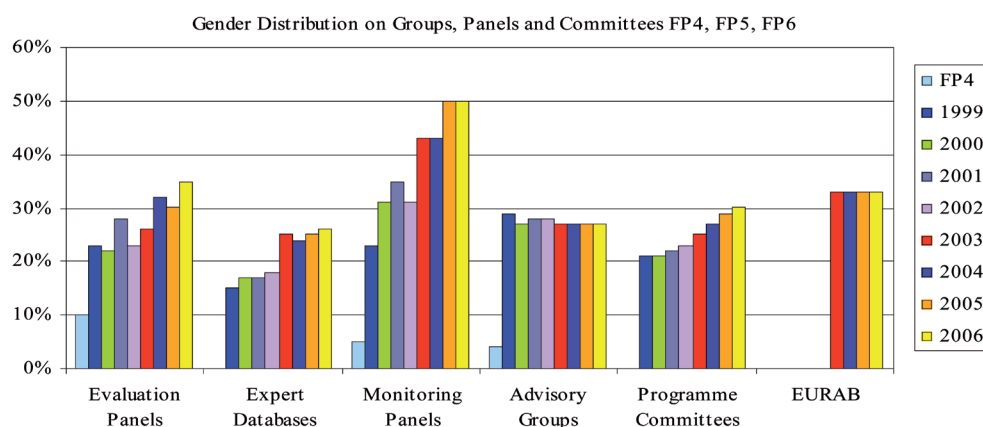


Figure 4.3: Distribution of women in groups, panels and committees (FP4, 5, 6)

Source: European Commission, Gender Equality Report – the Sixth Framework Programme, October 2008, page 6.

The positive trend set off by putting forward a target was already recognised by the EC in its Commission Staff Working Paper of 2001 (SEC(2001-771): *“Although women do not represent 40% of the committees and panels associated with FP5, the number of women represented is higher than at any stage during FP4, as far as data on FP4 are available. It is recognised that setting the target has had an impact on increasing the number of women involved in FP5.”* (European Commission, 2001d)

Looking at the figures breaking down the above averages for FP6 over the different fields reveals that women’s participation has been significantly above the average for the fields that were analysed in the present case study. It is also worth noting that Science and Society, the part in FP6 where the ‘gender in research’ area responsibility is located, scores highest and is setting the example. This positive result is a sign of specific attention and efforts for encouraging women’s participation in this directorate in the DG RTD that is in charge of managing Science and Society, which indicates favourable attitudes towards gender change in this particular locus of the organisation. Indeed, as suggested in section 2.6., explicit efforts can be regarded as indirect evidence of favourable local attitudes towards gender equality as a policy goal.

Table 4.12: Key figures on the participation of women

	Science & Society	Priority 7 (in 2006)	FP6
Evaluation panels	51 %	42 %	34 %
Programme Committee	49 %	39 %	30 %
Co-ordinators of evaluated proposals	40 %	27 %	17 %*
Participants in evaluated proposals	38 % female	28 % female	16 %*
Co-ordinators in financed projects	41 % female	29 % female	17 %

* Coordinators (respectively participants) of ‘submitted’ proposals versus of ‘evaluated’ proposals, the difference being the proposals submitted but not evaluated (mainly for eligibility reasons).

A comparison between FP6 and FP5 on women’s participation as coordinators or participants in FP5 projects is hampered by the fact that firm data on FP5 are not available because the system to collect and codify this data was only set in place after the 1999 Communication and was not fully functional. This is also confirmed in the synthesis report of the gender impact assessments performed under FP5 (European Commission, 2001). However, the tentative figures provided for 1999 indicate that no progress has been made in this respect in FP6. In 2001, the Commission writes *“The Commission services undertook to develop a system for ascertaining and compiling statistics on the sex of project promoters, contractors and persons recruited under contracts. This system is being developed. Initial results suggest that of the proposals received in 1999, 16% of the co-ordinators were women, and of the contracts signed, 18% were from women. The estimations of the equivalent numbers during FP4 were below 10 %. The establishment of this system has encountered unforeseen difficulties. Initial application forms for funding did not*

insist on the gender box being completed and consequently it was frequently ignored. There were problems encoding the gender in the computer system. These problems have now been rectified. However, it is not compulsory for firms submitting proposals or establishing contracts to submit details of the sex of the persons carrying out the work and frequently this valuable information is omitted. The gender data for project partners is incomplete. It is recognised that this is a problem, and solutions are currently being discussed.” (European Commission, 2001d)

The Gender Equality Report furthermore shows that success rates for female and male scientific coordinators have been similar across FP6, confirming the findings from the present analysis on the Science in Society and SSH fields. However, women are far more present as scientific coordinators of smaller FP6 funding instruments (like Specific Support Actions or Coordination Actions), but coordinated only 10% of Integrated Projects (IP) and 8% of Networks of Excellence (NoE), as pointed out by the panel of external experts who evaluated FP6 (Rietschel et al., 2009). An equal success rate does therefore not indicate a similar funding distribution over female and male scientific coordinators. And neither does it rule out a gender bias in the evaluation, as wrongly concluded by the expert panel that performed the ex-post evaluation of the Sixth Framework Programme (Rietschel et al., 2009) – as is shown in the next chapter (see notably section 5.2.).

4.5. Women’s participation in European research: findings from the ERA consultation

In 2007, the European Commission undertook a public consultation on the European Research Area, based on its Green Paper ‘The European Research Area: new perspectives’ (Commission of the European Communities, 2007).

In this Green paper, some of the Science in Society specific issues (i.e. gender and young people’s scientific education) are considered, in particular under Dimension 1 : Realising a single labour market for researchers which should guarantee ‘attractive working conditions for both men and women, without financial or administrative obstacles to trans-national mobility’. It is thus required ‘to remove the legal, administrative and practical (e.g. linguistic) barriers to geographical and inter-sectorial mobility, improve employment and working conditions for researchers, reconcile professional, private and family life, and address gender and demographic issues.’

The Green Paper raised the following question: *“How could we increase the numbers and quality of researchers in Europe by attracting young research talents, ensuring real equal opportunities for men and women and exploiting the experience and expertise of end-of-career researchers, for example in advisory and training roles?”*

In the online consultation, the above question was reformulated, and further developed in more specific sub-questions: a set of sub-questions related to attracting more young researchers to a research career; another set about female researchers and a third set about end-of-career researchers.

Some results of this public consultation (European Commission, 2008a) are interesting in the light of the present research because they shed light on the realities faced by female researchers on the work floor and in their daily lives, the obstacles they meet to advance their careers, and the lack of progress that can be noted in the absence of 'hard incentives' for research institutions to change this situation.⁷¹ In total, the Commission received 685 replies by the 31 August 2007 deadline for the on-line questionnaire. Of these, 559 respondents answered the above-mentioned question (referred to as RES4 in the online questionnaire). This corresponds to 82% of the total number of respondents to the survey as a whole (685). The majority of RES4 respondents were men (351, 63%) and 37% (208) were women, in line with the sex breakdown of the total of respondents to the survey.

An overwhelming majority (88%) agreed that providing for working and funding conditions that foster a better work/life-balance are important for increasing the recruitment and advancement of women in research careers.

As to the idea of benchmarking recruitment and funding of researchers at institutional level, the results are less clear with nearly half agreeing this can have positive effects, one third disagreeing and 20% of respondents stating they have no opinion. The proportion of those that disagree with this suggestion is higher among the men (38%) than among the women (25%). Comments added by respondents confirm the often 'hidden' or subtle discrimination of women in the scientific world and plead for more effective changes than a 'benchmarking' effort (Mergaert, 2007). Various respondents made references to the assessment system and evaluation criteria that need to be revised to stop discrimination at all levels. Respondents argued that the lack of women in senior positions is due to accumulated and repeated discriminations at the different stages of the research career. They suggested that projects should have clearly defined objectives and that evaluations should focus on success and participation, rather than only evaluating a continuous career.

*"To become a professor you need to pass at least 5 evaluations. If you have 80% chance of a man at each evaluation, you end up with $(0.8*0.8*0.8*0.8*0.8)=0.33$ after 5 evaluations, meaning that if a woman is evaluated just 20% below her value, she has only a 33% chance to become a professor compared to her male colleagues."* (female respondent, no country mentioned)

Some respondents point out that gender discrimination can be avoided by requiring that there is parity of the sexes in evaluation commissions.

The need to effectively implement anti-discrimination legislation and to remove current discriminatory practices against women is recommended by a number of respondents. The suggestion to implement positive discrimination in recruitment in favour of women is however

⁷¹ More specifically in relation to the above-mentioned question about attracting and retaining researchers in the profession, the Commission invited the author of the present work to analyse the results of the consultation.

rejected by nearly half of the respondents. There is a significant difference in opinion among the male and the female respondents: while 44% of the female respondents reject positive discrimination in favour of women, the share of men who reject this idea is much higher (66%). The quotes below show that positive discrimination tends to be regarded as causing adverse effects for the women that 'benefit' from it.

"As a woman I am totally against positive discrimination. I am for equality in salary, career and chances for men and women. If I am employed somewhere in a leading position, I would prefer to know that it is because of my experience, talents, merits, long studies, publications ... and not just because I happen to be a woman! This is almost insulting and does more harm than good to women in leading positions." (Female respondent)

"Positive discrimination may result in a poisoned short term benefit, because it fosters contempt from male colleagues and perpetuates the image of a "feebler sex" that needs special protection." (Male respondent)

Attention is also drawn to the pressure on researchers to demonstrate mobility, as an international track record is academically higher esteemed than a record not showing international exposure. As mobility causes extra difficulties for the reconciliation of private and professional life, the emphasis on mobility for researchers has been pointed out by the respondents as an element explaining the underrepresentation of women scientists.

Less than half of the respondents to the on-line questionnaire declare that they are sufficiently aware of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for their Recruitment ("Charter and Code") issued in 2005 by the European Commission (2005a). It is worth noting that in this Charter and Code of Conduct, references are made to the need to critically examine and where necessary adapt working conditions, organisational structures and values if these impede the full development of (all) researchers' potential. The first sentence of the first recommendation reads as follows: *"[The European Commission hereby recommends] that Member States endeavour to undertake the necessary steps to ensure that employers or funders of researchers develop and maintain a supportive research environment and working culture, where individuals and research groups are valued, encouraged and supported, and provided with the necessary material and intangible support to enable them to fulfil their objectives and tasks."* And specific measures are suggested to employers and/or research funders (page 17): *"They should aim to provide working conditions which allow both women and men researchers to combine family and work, children and career. Particular attention should be paid, inter alia, to flexible working hours, part-time working, tele-working and sabbatical leave, as well as to the necessary financial and administrative provisions governing such arrangements."*

The ultimate goal of the Charter and Code of Conduct (issued as a Commission recommendation) is however formulated mainly in economic terms (page 4): *"The ultimate political goal of this Recommendation is to contribute to the development of an attractive, open and sustainable*

European labour market for researchers, where the framework conditions allow for recruiting and retaining high quality researchers in environments conducive to effective performance and productivity.”

Three fifths of those respondents in the ERA consultation who say to know the Charter and Code consider that, due to their voluntary nature, the Charter and Code are unlikely to be adopted with sufficient rapidity to become a genuine factor for European research careers. While stakeholders generally agree that the voluntary nature of the Charter and Code could hamper the effectiveness of its implementation, various respondents made suggestions to translate the voluntary principles into concrete implementation, for example by making research funding from the EU research programmes conditional on recognition and implementation of the principles of the Charter, confirming herewith their belief in ‘hard incentives’.

The main conclusion from the above review of reactions to the ERA consultation, which took place in 2007, is that despite the Commission’s on-going efforts to encourage women’s participation in European research and despite the unravelling of the mechanisms holding back women’s advancement in scientific careers, not much change is noticed on the work floor. Reference was made to the absence of ‘hard incentives’ for change as a plausible explanation for the lack thereof.

4.6. Conclusions regarding women’s participation in European research

My operational approach for this chapter is to pinpoint variability and unevenness where they occur and to unveil the mechanisms that explain variability where possible.

By looking closely into women’s participation in the ‘Science and Society’ (S&S) and ‘Social Sciences and Humanities’ (SSH) parts of FP6 in particular, and in FP6 in general, the present chapter specifically traces variability, and also allows to assess whether the goal to increase women’s participation (towards the 40% target) was understood, whether the conditions of ‘accountability’ and of the involvement of civil society actors were fulfilled, and gives some indications as to the influence of local attitudes towards gender change on gender mainstreaming outcomes.

In terms of variability and unevenness, a number of differences can be pointed out. First, it is remarkable that – although the fields are scientifically quite close to each other – the rates of women’s participation have been significantly higher in Science and Society than in SSH. And both performed clearly better than the averages that were noted across all fields in FP6. Next, an important difference in women’s participation is noted between framework programme structures (on which the EC has a direct influence and on which the 40% target applies) and project teams. Third, evolution and variability is also identified in time: while there is a slow and rather small, but quite steady increase noticeable in women’s participation in FP structures, variability in the performance can be found within the fields across the different calls (which covered different research topics). However, also a decrease over time has been

found: in women's presence among nominations and winners of Descartes Prizes. A fourth difference is in the success rates of women and men as coordinators of projects according to the instrument: both in S&S and in SSH, women are significantly more successful than men in the STREP (Specific Targeted Research Project), a small-scale project form.

What can further be concluded in relation to the research questions? In relation to the question whether there may have been misunderstandings about the goals of the gender mainstreaming efforts, it may be clear from the analysis that there have not been confusion or misunderstandings about the European Commission's ambition to raise women's participation in European research. However, there has been some discussion on the scope of the 40% target. Whereas some argue that it is a general target that is valid across the framework programme, others emphasise that initially it was formally set for committees and panels only, while it has gradually been generalised (informally) across the framework programme. Referring to the 1999 Communication quoted above, I believe that the formulation supports an interpretation of the 40% target as inclusive of all activities and actions undertaken under the framework programme rather than as restricted to the Marie Curie scholarships, advisory groups and assessment panels. The narrower interpretation of the Commission's target to a scope that is within its own control, as opposed to the wider responsibility of the research community at large setting up research teams, can be seen as a form of 'shrinking' in the terms of Lombardo, Meier and Verloo (2009c).

The fact that the need for progressing gender equality in European research has been motivated by the Commission in the light of the efforts required to reach the Lisbon goals is a clear example of 'bending' the concept of gender equality: subjecting it to a 'higher' ambition, or a required intermediate step towards another goal. Although in academic literature the 'bending' of gender equality tends to be considered as something negative (Lombardo et al., 2009b), there is no hard evidence that this bending has brought about any negative effects.

An analysis of the figures of women's participation in committees, groups and panels over the years and across the framework programmes allows to see that the share of women's participation at the Framework Programme level has nevertheless increased consistently since FP4, an achievement that can be attributed to the '40% target'.

This positive effect can at least in part be explained by the fact that the target has been consistently emphasised and referred to in formal documents and given visibility. Also, efforts have been undertaken to monitor this target across disciplines ('priorities', 'domains' or 'fields' in framework programme jargon) and over the years. The EC publishes these figures, at aggregate level and broken down over the fields and years, thus reporting on achievements or lack thereof in certain parts of the framework programme, which are directly attributable to Commission departments.⁷² This exposure, or 'naming and shaming' practice, has undoubtedly helped to sustain the steady

⁷² These are mostly in the Directorate-General (DG) for Research, which manages the RTD Framework Programmes, but can also be located in the DG Enterprise and Industry, the DG Information Society and Media, the DG Energy and Transport, the DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries – for certain fields.

increase of women's participation in FP6-related (management) activities at the framework programme level, as demonstrated above. This observation seems to support the argument of Pollack and Hafner-Burton (2009) that incentives help to make progress. It also supports the argument that holding people accountable for what they do (because by publishing results, responsibility for good and bad results is attributable, if not to individuals, at least to departments) helps to obtain good results. The research thus shows that a (technocratic) acceptance of the 40% target by the civil servants in charge of composing groups, resulted in improved participation from women.

The fact that the best results in terms of women's participation in FP structures are achieved in the S&S domain can at least in part be explained by the fact that the Directorate responsible for S&S hosts the 'Women and Science' Unit, where knowledge and expertise are centralised and specific efforts are undertaken. This finding indicates that the location of the gender machinery within the organisational structure may affect the locally reigning attitudes towards gender change. In this case, the directorate in charge of S&S seemed to have been marked by more favourable local attitudes than other departments of the DG Research. The responsibility for SSH relied with a unit that at the start of FP6 was located in a different Directorate; but that unit was in 2006 moved to the same Directorate that managed S&S.

However, also counter-evidence against the accountability argument has been found in my research. The Descartes Prizes have been the 'bad pupil in the class' throughout FP6, despite the initiative falling within the Science and Society part of FP6 and within the remit of the same directorate of the DG Research where 'gender in research' is located. The research has demonstrated the consistently poor status of women in FP6 among the Descartes Prize candidates and winners, both for the Research and for the Communication prizes. The low rate of winning women and the sign of a possible gender bias in the selection of winners is likely to be attributable to the fact that the guidance notes for evaluators for these prizes did not contain any reference to gender. These findings confirm that when gender equality provisions are not systematically reflected in processes, terms of reference or other supporting documents, the formal commitments made by the European Commission to advance gender equality in research do not translate into results and thus 'evaporate.' This is the effect of 'policy evaporation' which Derbyshire described (Derbyshire, 2002), an effect which has been observed also in other contexts where gender mainstreaming did not yield the results one would have hoped for (Macdonald, 2003).

As will be mentioned also further in this book, in the chapter that looks more closely into the internal functioning of the DG Research (chapter 7), it is furthermore worth noting that the disappointing performance of the Descartes Prizes was exposed already after the first monitoring round at the occasion of a presentation of the first results of the author's gender monitoring work to the Helsinki Group, an occasion where the Head of Unit in charge of the Descartes Prizes was present and had explicitly stated that he had duly noted the issue and would make sure to rectify the situation. Nothing happened however. This can be explained by two elements: first, the 'performance' of the Descartes Prizes in terms of male/female sex

breakdowns has not been monitored or published by the Commission in the same way as for the different FP structures and fields⁷³ – this means that the Descartes Prizes escape the ‘naming and shaming’ practice. Furthermore, the fact that no adjustments were made after the first monitoring round is telling for the (lack of) visibility of and the (lack of) importance attached to the gender monitoring studies that were being done. Apparently, the gender monitoring studies were not perceived as ‘threatening’ enough to adjust ill practice where exposed, so did not serve as ‘hard incentive’. A second element that can explain the bad performance of the Descartes Prizes is the local attitudes towards gender equality as a policy goal in the ‘Communication’ unit in charge of these Prizes. As an exception within the Directorate managing the S&S domain, this unit appeared not very receptive to gender issues and its head (as mentioned above) manifested non-action. This observation does hint to the existence of resistance to gender equality considerations within the DG Research, and confirms Hooghe’s argument of ‘little statelets’ existing within the Commission, reigned by local heads who have different visions and do not necessarily share the same set of values.

While the 40% target does bring about slow but steady progress at FP level, this progress does not trickle down to the project level. Indeed, in FP6, there appeared to be a problem in ‘getting the message down the pipeline’ to trigger results outside the policy context.

The findings from the research suggest that since the Commission’s observations about the mechanisms explaining women’s underrepresentation in science and research professions in 2003, not much has improved on the work floor. Both the statistics about women’s participation in EU funded research projects and the results from the ERA consultation confirm that women are still underrepresented, deal with inequalities and face important barriers to advance in their career.

Indeed, women’s participation in research projects – be it as coordinators or as participants – does not seem to rise. The target had thus no effect ‘on the ground’. The most likely explanation for this is the fact that, apart from encouragement, no instruments had been installed to push women’s participation at the projects level. No requirements were formulated and neither was ‘gender balance’ in the research teams a criterion to be checked by evaluators during the proposal evaluation process. It can easily be assumed that a strict(er) requirement (a so-called ‘hard incentive’) in terms of gender balance in teams would have brought about a different picture. Furthermore, as the previous chapter has shown, accountability structures were missing: the electronic reporting system through which the statistics relating to the sex-compositions of the research teams had to be entered was not fully operational, statistics were not duly submitted by teams, and the EC officers did not demand from the teams to comply with this reporting obligation.

Lack of progress in terms of women’s participation in projects should most likely be seen more

⁷³ As for example in the Gender Equality Report on FP6 (European Commission 2008) or in the She Figures (European Commission 2009, European Commission 2006).

in the light of insufficient incentives and a too soft approach of the European Commission (hence accountability structures) towards its audience, the research community participating in FP6, rather than in terms of 'resistance' against gender equality itself. No quotas were imposed on women's participation, no requirements set, no comprehensive awareness-raising efforts undertaken. Funding was (and is) not made conditional on respect for gender equality criteria in FP6 - nor in its predecessors or in FP7 for that matter. Also these flaws are manifestations of 'policy evaporation', happening between the policy definition and the policy implementation stage.

As regards the missing awareness-raising efforts, I suggest that an important shortcoming of the gender approach in FP6 is that the communication challenge of bridging from the policy-level (the Framework Programme management) to the project level or to the work floor (the 'real world') has been largely underestimated. Indeed, (policy) intentions to implement gender mainstreaming at the project level imply a significant widening of the audiences to be reached and therefore much more efforts are required to bring the message across. And from there, initiatives should be launched that can support institutional change. Under FP6, however, no such efforts have been undertaken.

The same problem can be recognised in the case of the *European Charter for Researchers* and the *Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers*: they are hardly known in the research community and being a voluntary framework does not constitute any guarantee for results, unless some form of 'incentive' would be foreseen for their adoption. Still, we have seen that the Charter and Code indicate the need to address organisational structures and values if all researchers, women and men alike, are to be given equal opportunities for a fulfilling career and the development of their potential. Again however (as was the case in the Guide for Proposers, as described in Chapter 3.), this recommendation is addressed to researchers' employers and does not refer to European Commission's intentions for its own structures and values.

In summary, the analysis has demonstrated that there is variability in performance and thus also unevenness in results in terms of women's participation in FP structures. These can be explained by the existence or non-existence of ways to locate responsibilities for good or bad performance within the EC. Also local attitudes towards gender change within the different departments of the DG Research seem to influence the results in terms of women's participation in the fields of the Framework Programme for which they are responsible. The overall, slow progress that is made can be attributed to the 40% target: progress is indeed noted in the sex balance of panels and committees, whose composition is the responsibility of the European Commission. The fact that no progress is noted at the projects' level can be attributed to a lack of awareness in the research community as well as to missing firm requirements (or 'hard incentives') on the part of the EC. These elements relate to two different conditions: the fact that no awareness-raising and capacity-building actions were foreseen for the researchers in

the gender mainstreaming implementation planning stage (resulting in an incomplete policy mix, as the researchers were not provided with the necessary resources), and to missing accountability structures. Whereas the Commission does point out in the Charter and Code the need to address organisational structures and cultures in order to be able to provide equal opportunities to all, there is no incentive for research organisations to do so. However, while the EC with this Charter and Code demonstrates to be aware of this condition, there are no indications that it applies the recommendation on its own organisation.

The gender monitoring studies, being performed by gender experts (academics and consultants), can be regarded as openings for external experts (as substitutes for 'civil society') to influence the gender mainstreaming implementation. They have used this opportunity, but their contributions have not been taken up. As far as the present analysis has shown, these studies have not succeeded in influencing the gender mainstreaming implementation – at least not substantially.

Finally, this chapter has shown that the performances in terms of gender mainstreaming where women's participation is concerned are clearly variable, and these differences may in part be explained by the different levels of institutional embedding of the gender equality value within the Directorate-General. The sustained under-performance of the Descartes Prizes supports the argument that local attitudes towards gender equality as a policy goal impact upon the gender mainstreaming efforts and results. Non-action on the part of the head of unit in charge of the Descartes Prizes can be seen as related to an unfavourable attitude towards gender issues in that locus.

5. Gender in European research: mainstreaming gender in the projects

The present chapter focuses on the funded research projects themselves. It aims at verifying the results of the efforts undertaken towards the realisation of the second of the gender mainstreaming objectives: to render research gender-sensitive. Doing so allows assessing the extent to which the ‘bridging’ from the policy level to the ‘real world’ has been successful. Here again, variability will be traced, and I will try to identify what precisely has been problematic and which mechanisms have affected the results. The main contribution of this chapter will be to the research question that deals with the fulfilment of the conditions for effective gender mainstreaming. However, it will also shed light on the conceptual puzzle and will improve our understanding of apparent signals of ‘resistance’.

It is useful to keep in mind the policy approach in FP6 with regard to gender in the research projects, which followed logically the approach taken at the start of FP5 (which ran from 1998 till 2002), when the European Commission stated in its 1999 Communication ‘Women and Science – Mobilising women to enrich European research’ (European Commission, 1999), that: women’s participation in research must be encouraged (research ‘with’ women), research must address women’s needs (research ‘for’ women) and research should contribute to an enhanced understanding of gender issues (research ‘on’ women) – thus recognising the threefold relationship between women and research.

As set out earlier in this work, this threefold approach towards advancing gender equality was maintained in FP6, provisions and supporting elements for its implementation developed i.a. in the Guide for Proposers’ Annex 4, through the introduction of the Gender Action Plan as mandatory tool for Integrated Projects and Networks of Excellence, as well as in the Vademecum (European Commission, 2003c).

Under FP6, for the first time, two gender-specific research calls for proposals were launched under the Science and Society activity area (Woman and Science 2004, and Women and Science 2005), and in total around €20 million was foreseen to be spent to Women in Science activities in FP6 (European Commission, 2005e).

5.1. Method and data

5.1.1. *Methodological approach*

The present chapter is based on an in-depth analysis of a sample of projects that were funded under the two FP6 areas reviewed in this study (‘Science and Society’ and SSH). For this project sample, the analysis comprises the planning stage and the implementation stage and considers the performance of the project applicants, project holders and project evaluators. Further in this methodology section, an explanation is provided of the analytical framework

that was used for the review of the projects and a description of the sample of projects that was analysed.

Section two reports on the gender equality provisions that had been foreseen by the project applicants in their projects, thus looking into the planning phase of the projects. Then we turn to how actors (evaluators and project teams) have implemented their tasks under FP6. This analysis will not only allow to pinpoint any variability in this respect, it will also allow to check whether the actors were adequately equipped to take up their role and whether there have been any misunderstandings among them about the gender equality goal to be achieved. Section three addresses how the evaluators have assessed the projects in relation to gender by comparing the Evaluation Summary Reports with my own assessment of the projects. Sections four and five look into how gender has been addressed in the projects, based on the technical annexes of the project contracts and the activity reports (section four) and the results of the Science and Society Reporting which project holders had to submit (section five). The last section in this chapter discusses the findings from the gender analysis of the funded projects in the light of my research questions.

5.1.2. Analytical framework for the project review

For the assessment of the integration of gender in the projects, the technical annexes attached to the contracts of the projects have been reviewed using an analysis tool based on the one developed by Mary Braithwaite for her analyses under the FP5 Gender Impact Assessment work (Braithwaite, 2001). This analysis looks specifically into the project planning, to see how this planning has taken gender-related needs into account. The analysis also verifies the understanding of gender by the researchers, from a purely quantitative understanding (a ‘counting heads’ approach) to a more complex understanding of mechanisms that (re-)produce inequalities or of gender constructs in society. Lastly, the analysis looks into the extent to which gender considerations have been integrated into the project, from a fragmented to an embedded, comprehensive integration.

The analysis will bring to light variabilities within the projects’ approach to gender and will clarify whether gender has been addressed as a staged process by the researchers themselves, in their projects. This chapter will thus also help to answer the research question that deals with the resources that were available to the actors by assessing whether the researchers were actually capable of delivering upon the gender-related expectations the EC had formulated.

The technical annexes attached to the project contracts are ‘improved’ versions of the project proposals, after contract negotiations with Commission staff. In what follows, where ‘proposals’ is mentioned, these are in fact the technical annexes.

Specifically, the analysis comprised the following aspects:

1. A first assessment concerned the design of the project (or its ‘planning’) in terms of treatment of gender: the female / male balance in the team; the availability of gender

- expertise among the team members; measures taken within the team or project structure (e.g. by devoting an entire work package to 'gender') to ensure attention to gender issues and/or equal opportunities.
2. A next step consisted of a review of whether gender was mentioned or treated as a relevant factor or variable at all in the project. This information was compared with the Evaluation Summary Report (ESR) analysis performed.
 3. The analysis continued by looking at the approach taken to the gender dimension. The following categories were distinguished :
 - ↗ the presentation of sex-disaggregated statistics
 - ↗ the identification of specific gender issues to be addressed (based on specific characteristics / requirements of women)
 - ↗ the recognition of gender differences in roles or responsibilities which might be inter-related (gender relations)
 - ↗ the recognition of inequalities
 - ↗ the recognition of gendered structures or systems: how the differences are (re-) produced or altered
 - ↗ the recognition of gender constructs (i.e. that key concepts are gendered)
 4. Next, the extent to which gender was integrated into the project design was reviewed :
 - ↗ in the abstract of the project proposal
 - ↗ in the inputs (human, documentation, ...)
 - ↗ in the project activities
 - ↗ in the planned outputs (results, findings)
 - ↗ in the intended impacts (contribution to Community policy and objectives)

The results from this analysis led to a categorisation of the projects into one of the following categories:

- ↗ Gender blind (no mention of gender at all, although gender is a relevant factor)
- ↗ Gender is relevant and mentioned but not addressed
- ↗ Gender integrated (gender is integrated into the research design)
- ↗ Gender-specific (gender, or women / men, is the main subject and focus of the research)

5.1.3. *Sample*

In total, a sample of 165 projects was analysed: 75 projects⁷⁴ financed under Science and Society and 90 financed under Priority 7 were reviewed.

The projects were selected through stratified random sampling from all of the twenty

⁷⁴ The technical annexes to the contracts of more projects had been requested for analysis, aiming at a sample of about 60% of the total number of approved projects, but especially in the last year of the empirical research period it became almost impossible to collect the necessary material (due to unavailability of resource persons in the Commission and to data appearing to be irretrievable). This explains the lower than planned number of projects analysed.

calls of Science and Society (excluding the Descartes calls) and from both Priority 7 calls. These samples represent respectively 49% and 64% of the total number of projects financed under these fields: 152 contracts were signed under Science and Society and 140 under Priority 7.

Science and Society

Of the sample of 75 projects, 19 (25%) are 'gender specific', all others are gender relevant. Considered as 'gender specific' are those project which have gender issues as main research focus. The share of gender specific projects in the sample is higher than in the total of approved projects: of the 152 projects approved under Science and Society, 31 (or 20%) are gender specific. These 31 projects together received EC funding for over €22 million, 10% more than the amount budgeted for gender specific projects in the work programme.

Table 5.1: Share of gender specific projects in proposals evaluated and contracts signed

	Proposals evaluated	Contracts signed	Success rate of proposals
S&S – all calls (excluding Descartes)	962	152	16 %
S&S – all calls (excluding Descartes) - gender specific projects	183	31	17 %
Share of gender-specific projects in total	19 %	20 %	

Most projects in the sample are Specific Support Actions which is the most used instrument in terms of number of projects in Science & Society.

The tables 5.2 and 5.3 provide some more information on the sample.

Table 5.2: Type of instrument and sex of the coordinator (N=75)

	Specific Targeted Research Project (STREP)	Coordination Action (CA)	Specific Support Action (SSA)	Total
Male	3	12	32	47
Female	5	4	19	28
Total	8	16	51	75

37% of the projects in the sample is coordinated by a woman. This compares to 41% of female coordinators among all approved Science and Society projects.

Table 5.3: Split of the projects according to the research area in S&S (N=75)

Research area	Number of projects
Governance and scientific advice	9
Ethics	17
Uncertainty, risk and implementing the precautionary principle	2
Scientific and technology culture, young people, science education and careers	25
Women in science	16
Horizontal actions	2
Science shops	4
Total	75

Social sciences and humanities (Priority 7)

A sample of 90 projects out of 140 financed under both Priority 7 calls was analysed. This represents 64% of the selected proposals. Of the sample, 4 projects are 'gender specific'. The share of gender specific projects in the sample (4%) corresponds to the share of gender specific projects in the total of approved projects, where 6 out of 140 projects is gender specific. Together, these 6 projects represent nearly €13 million.

Table 5.4: Share of gender specific projects in proposals evaluated and contracts signed - Priority 7

	Proposals evaluated	Contracts signed	Success rate of proposals
Priority 7 - both calls	850	140	16 %
Priority 7 – both calls – gender specific projects	25	6	24 %
Share of gender-specific projects in total	3 %	4 %	

Before presenting the treatment of gender in the sample of projects, some descriptive information on the sample is provided. The table 5.5 presents the share of projects per call that has been analysed in the sample. Together, 64% of the financed projects has been analysed in detail (90 projects in absolute numbers).

One third of the projects in the sample (30%) is coordinated by a woman. This corresponds to the proportion of female coordinators in the total of Priority 7 approved projects (40 female coordinators on 140 approved projects, or 29 %).

Table 5.5: Number of projects sampled per Priority 7 part

	CIT1	CIT2	CIT3	CIT4	CIT5	CIT6	Total
Projects financed	5	39	15	14	52	15	140 (100%)
Sample	5	15	15	12	33	10	90 (64%)

Table 5.6: Type of instrument and sex of coordinator in sampled projects (N=90)

	IP	NoE	STREP	CA	SSA	Sample
Male	13	11	30	3	6	63
Female	7	3	12	1	4	27
Sample	20	14	42	4	10	90

Table 5.7: Split of the selected projects according to the research area of Priority 7 (N=90)

Research Area	Number of projects
Research Area 1: Improving the generation, distribution and use of knowledge and its impact on economic and social development	12
Research Area 2: Options and choices for the development of a knowledge-based society	18
Research Area 3: The variety of paths towards a knowledge society	7
Research Area 4: The implications of European integration and enlargement for governance and the citizen	7
Research Area 5: Articulation of areas of responsibility and new forms of governance	9
Research Area 6: Issues connected with the resolution of conflicts and restoration of peace and justice	8
Research Area 7: New forms of citizenship and cultural identities	14
Research Area 8: Actions to promote the ERA in SSH	15
Total sample	90

The main research areas addressed by the sample of projects, as listed in the Priority 7 Work Programme 2004-2006, are given in table 5.7. For those projects where more than one research area was indicated, the first indicated area has been considered as the 'main' area. The eight themes are all represented in the sample.

As the above has shown, the samples of projects for both Science and Society and Priority 7 are well balanced in terms of sex of the coordinator, funding instrument and distribution over the research areas, and thus allow for a reliable analysis.

5.2. Gender equality provisions in the research projects

This section looks into the factors that were foreseen in the project set-up and design (in the project planning) that could help enhance the integration of gender issues in the implementation. By looking into the planning stage of the projects, we will be able to assess whether the gender mainstreaming at the project level was approached as a staged process. This analysis will also provide insights into whether the necessary resources have been made available to ensure an adequate implementation.

Male/female balance in the team

As mentioned in the previous chapter, 37 % of the Science and Society projects and one third (27 out of 90) of the Priority 7 projects in the sample have a female coordinator. For Science and Society, this high number is biased by the 'Women in Science' projects, of which 13 out of 16 are led by women.

Only 1 out of 3 project teams have a good male/female balance. Considered as good (or acceptable) have been those project teams with not less than 40% of members from the same sex, in line with the 40% target set by the European Commission. This assessment has been made on the basis of the sex of the persons representing the members of the partnership. This proportion is the same for gender relevant and gender specific projects, and for Science and Society and Priority 7. For gender specific projects this is because of nearly all female teams, while in gender relevant projects there is a dominance of male participants.

Projects with a female coordinator are more likely to have a good gender balance: of the gender relevant projects, 50% with a woman as leader have a good balance against 28 % of those with a male leader. Of the gender specific projects led by women only 24% show a good gender balance as these teams are often being nearly exclusively composed of women; whereas those few gender specific projects led by men (6 projects) tend to have a better gender balance. Given the current gender inequality at the expense of women, it can also be argued however that a reverse inequality in certain projects (at the expense of men's participation) is less problematic.

The composition of the full scientific team might show different results in terms of gender balance, but this information was not systematically available. Moreover, even when the full scientific team was listed in proposals, information on the sex of the team members was not always mentioned.

Availability of gender expertise in the team

The share of projects in the sample with gender expertise available in the research team varies between 40% (Science and Society) and 50% (Priority 7). This is logically 100% for the gender specific research projects. For the gender relevant projects, 23% have gender expertise in the team in the Science and Society field, while half of the projects in Priority 7. In some cases this is explicitly put forward, while in others this had to be deduced from the presentations or curricula vitae of the team members that were provided in the proposal.

When looking at the type of instruments (only for the gender relevant projects), no differences could be noted between instruments in Priority 7, while for Science and Society the CA appears as the instrument where gender expertise is more likely to be included in the team: 47% of the projects compared to 17% for Strep and 29% for SSAs.

Regarding the sex of the coordinator, it appears that teams led by women are more likely to have gender expertise available in the team: 60% of the teams led by women have gender expertise available, and 38% of those led by men. In Priority 7, 19 out of 27 teams led by women (70%) have gender expertise available, while this is the case only for 26 out of 63 teams led by men (41%). In Science and Society, 14 out of 28 female coordinators have foreseen gender expertise, compared to 16 out of 47 male coordinators.

Measures taken in the team to ensure attention for gender issues

In half of the projects in the sample (49% in Science and Society, and 51% in Priority 7), measures are foreseen in the team structure and/or project set-up to ensure that a balanced participation, equal opportunities and/or gender issues are taken into account. This share includes all gender specific projects (which make up 25% of the sample).

Here again, female coordinators are more likely to specify such measures than men: 60% of female coordinators foresee specific measures against 35% of male coordinators.

Typical examples of such measures are:

- ⇒ a specific work package being devoted to 'gender' in relation to the main subject of the research;
- ⇒ a gender expert (or 'gender coordinator', or even 'gender issues officer') being formally appointed as responsible, to ensure the integration of gender issues in the work performed;
- ⇒ the explicitation that recruitment will aim at realising a better gender balance (at all levels) in the team. A few projects even set specific targets and/or are precise as to the proposed measures: not setting age limits, effectively applying positive discrimination, allowing part-time work.

The review of the projects indicates that the claims that gender issues will duly be taken into account appear more credible when a specific work package is dedicated to gender issues. On the contrary, when gender issues are only mentioned as part of the objectives of one of the work packages, it appears questionable whether gender issues will indeed be of high relevance in the project. In such case, it is rather as if they are introduced as a mere lip service, as illustrated by the examples below.

One gender relevant project (Science and Society, call 1) focuses on bio medics from a socio-cultural, governance and ethical point of view. It proposes nine work packages with one work package generally dedicated to the realisation of focus groups. This work package will inter alia deal with the "*development of contents for focus groups concerning biomedicine and body concepts, religion, gender and their influences on identity and health-concepts.*" In the absence of further specifications of gender issues, it is unclear whether (and how) these will indeed be addressed.

A gender relevant project (Science and Society, call 13) in the area of Science Communication through events states in one WP, which consists of the development of guidelines and a manual for the participants in the project, that all project activities “*will meet high ethics and gender standards*”. However, there are no specifications whatsoever in the proposal on how the project will address the gender dimension and implement these intentions.

A minority of the gender relevant projects that put in place measures to ensure gender equality in the team structure do so by appointing women to senior positions within the projects (e.g. in the steering committee). Still others take a more comprehensive approach in their planning of measures to integrate gender in their projects.

A good practice example is that of a Priority 7 project where not only a ‘gender issue coordinator’ will be appointed, but where also a ‘gender guidebook’ will be compiled. It is clear that for this project gender issues have been considered comprehensively in the project planning stage, and that endeavours were undertaken to ensure their integration during the implementation stage of the project.

This CIT3 project, a NoE coordinated by a woman, deals with ‘sustainable development in a diverse world’. It integrates gender properly in the project considering the role of women in the public sphere, gender-specific migration waves, women as force for change, unequal power relations and social arrangements, etc. The ‘gender guidebook’ that will be developed is said to :

- develop a conceptual gender framework, conceptualising the gender issues in the context of the research activities and outlining guidelines for considering gender in the methodology (e.g. for data collection);
- propose long-term quantitative objectives for the participation of women in the activities (within the project, and in its ‘outreach’ activities) and define action and rules to realise the objectives (e.g. procedures for selection of participants to events / training courses; rules for gender balance in decision-making bodies; ...);
- include guidelines for using gender-neutral language in the research;
- include guidelines that the project website promotes gender equality.

In summary, the review of the project planning has shown that the extent to which provisions have been foreseen within the projects to ensure that gender issues would be integrated have been variable. Still, across the board, it has been noted that female project coordinators are more likely than their male counterparts to put provisions in place to allow an adequate consideration of gender in their projects: they are more like to have sex-balanced project teams, to have gender expertise available in their team, and to foresee structural measures in their project set-up.

5.3. Gender in the proposal and in the Evaluation Summary Report (ESR)

In this section, we turn to how the external peer evaluators have assessed the project proposals, notably in terms of their integration of gender issues. For doing so, I verify what the evaluators have expressed in the Evaluation Summary Reports (ESR) for the respective projects in my sample and compare this assessment with my own review of the project proposals in terms of whether gender was mentioned or treated as a relevant factor at all by the applicants.

This analysis will bring to light any variability that may have existed in the assessment of proposals from a gender perspective. Also, it may provide insights into the capacity of the evaluators to actually assess the proposals in terms of their integration of gender issues.

For nearly all (90%) of the projects, gender is mentioned as a relevant factor in the proposal (63 out of 75 for Science and Society, and 85 of the 90 Priority 7 projects).

The tables below give the split by research area for Science and Society and for Priority 7 respectively. These tables show that there were apparently research areas where the gender relevance was less clear to applicants. Notably the theme ‘Scientific and technology culture, young people, science education and careers’ in the Science and Society field shows a higher share of projects not mentioning gender.

The share of projects not mentioning gender is significantly lower within the SSH field than in Science and Society. While on the one hand this finding can be considered as quite striking because the ‘women and science’ concerns under FP6 were hosted by the Science and Society area, this observation is less surprising considering the fact that under Priority 7 funding instruments were used that required a Gender Action Plan in the projects (see Chapter 6 hereafter for a detailed analysis of the Gender Action Plans), whereas this was not the case under Science and Society.

Table 5.8: Split of the projects according to the research area in S&S and whether gender is mentioned or treated in the proposal (Science and Society, N=75)

Science and Society Research area	Gender mentioned yes	Gender mentioned no
Governance and scientific advice	7	2
Ethics	16	1
Uncertainty, risk and implementing the precautionary principle	1	1
Scientific and technology culture, young people, science education and careers	19	6
Women in science	16	0
Science Shops	2	2
Total	63	12

Table 5.9: Split of the projects according to the research area in Priority 7 and whether gender is mentioned or treated in the proposal (Priority 7, N=90)

Priority 7 Research area	Gender mentioned yes	Gender mentioned no
Improving the generation, distribution and use of knowledge and its impact on economic and social development Options and choices for the development of a knowledge-based society	12	0
The variety of paths towards a knowledge society	18	0
The implications of European integration and enlargement for governance and the citizen	5	2
Articulation of areas of responsibility and new forms of governance	7	0
Issues connected with the resolution of conflicts and restoration of peace and justice	9	0
New forms of citizenship and cultural identities	8	0
Actions to promote the European Research Area in the social sciences and humanities and their contribution to the knowledge based society in Europe	14	0
	12	3
Total	85	5

In Science and Society projects, female coordinators are more often covering gender in their proposals. However, this result is positively biased by the ‘Women in Science’ projects, of which all but one are gender specific and of which 13 are coordinated by women. Looking at Priority 7, there is no significant difference between female and male coordinators: 96% of women and 94% of men mentioned gender in their proposal. Therefore, based on this limited sample, it can be concluded that female coordinators of a gender relevant proposal do not seem more likely than their male counterparts to address gender issues in their proposal.

Gender issues are mentioned in the Evaluation Summary Reports (ESR) of four in ten Science and Society projects analysed. The table below shows that gender is more likely to be mentioned in the ESR if the issue is covered in the proposal. The two projects where gender is mentioned in the ESR and not in the proposal are cases where the evaluators identified the necessity to better cover gender in the proposal.

Table 5.10: Gender mentioned in the ESR and in the proposal (Science and Society, N=75)

	Mentioned ESR yes	Mentioned ESR no
Mentioned in proposal – yes	28	35
Mentioned in proposal – no	2	10

Table 5.11: Gender mentioned in the ESR and in the proposal (Priority 7, N=90)

yes	Mentioned ESR	Mentioned ESR
	no	
Mentioned in proposal – yes	51	34
Mentioned in proposal – no	2	3

For 53 of the selected 90 Priority 7 projects (nearly 60%), the Evaluation Summary Report contained a remark concerning ‘gender’, while 85 projects of the selected 90 projects mentioned gender or treated gender as a relevant factor in their proposal.

As in the SSH field projects were funded for which a Gender Action Plan was mandatory in the project proposal, the analysis work on the SSH field also looked specifically into the comments made by the evaluators about these Gender Action Plans (for a more detailed analysis of the Gender Action Plans, see Chapter 6). The results show that when the evaluators explicitly commented in the ESR on the Gender Action Plan, these comments tended to be of a general nature (as actually opposed to other very precise and pertinent remarks given in the ESR in relation to other aspects of the proposal). This can be interpreted as a sign of some confusion and uncertainty about how to assess it.

In summary, variability has been recognised in the proportion of project proposals that explicitly mention gender as a relevant factor. Such variability may be explained in terms of the research areas addressed by the call for proposals, but possibly also by the funding instrument used (as under Priority 7, there were project formats that required a Gender Action Plan to be included in the proposal). We have also seen that the Evaluation Summary Reports are more likely to contain a remark regarding ‘gender’ when gender is mentioned as a relevant factor in the proposal. This observation suggests that the omission of gender issues by the applicants, even when gender is relevant for the research, has possibly been ignored by the evaluators.

5.4. The gender dimension in European research projects

The present section looks into how gender issues have been dealt with by the researchers in their work. By analysing the proposals (as included in the contracts with the European Commission), we will examine researchers’ understanding of gender and the comprehensiveness (or lack thereof) of the integration of gender issues in the project design. The approach taken to the gender dimension was analysed by categorising how gender is understood and treated in the project proposals (as included in the technical annexes to the contract). Six different approaches were defined, which partly overlap and are thus not mutually exclusive. Departing from the rationale of gender mainstreaming, the recognition of gendered structures and the recognition of gendered constructs hold the greatest ‘transformative’ potential. Establishing the proportion of projects that fall into these categories provides therefore an indicator of the potential held by the EU-funded projects in terms of gender change.

By subsequently analysing the project reporting, we will try to assess to what extent gender-related intentions and tasks have also been implemented.

5.4.1. *Science and Society*

The gender dimension in the research content

The table below gives the overall results of the analysis for the full sample, differentiating between gender specific and gender relevant projects. Not surprisingly, the way in which gender is addressed and understood in gender specific projects is different and more complex than in gender relevant projects. One also has to take into account that twelve of the gender relevant projects did not mention gender at all in their proposal.

Table 5.12: Approach taken to the gender dimension in absolute figures and in percentages (all projects – N=75)

	Gender specific N=19		Gender relevant N=56	
	No.	%	No.	%
Sex disaggregation in statistics	15	79%	1	2%
Acknowledgement of specific characteristics of women / identification of gender issues to be addressed	19	100%	21	38%
The recognition of gender differences in roles or responsibilities which might be inter-related (gender relations)	11	58%	6	11%
The recognition of inequalities	13	68%	12	21%
The recognition of gendered structures or systems (how the differences are (re-)produced or altered)	9	47%	5	9%
The recognition of gender constructs (i.e. that key concepts in society are gendered)	2	11%	1	2%
Gender not mentioned	-	-	12	21%

From the gender specific projects, seven out of ten proposals recognise inequalities explicitly and all of them identify specific research issues to be addressed; four out of five proposals present disaggregated figures according to sex; six out of ten proposals recognise gender differences between the sexes that are related to the subject of the work; one out of three was considered as recognising gendered structures, systems and constructs. These results correspond to what could be expected for gender specific research projects, gender issues constituting their main research topic.

In gender relevant projects, the ways to address gender which are most common are the acknowledgement of specific research issues (for approximately 4 out of 10) and the recognition of inequalities (approximately 1 out of 4 projects), as the examples below show. The occurrence

of the recognition of gender differences and the use of sex disaggregated figures are however surprisingly low.

One gender relevant project proposal (call 5) claims that women need role models in science and states that “Taking into account the gender-specific popularisation of science, girls must be addressed differently by discussing the reasons for the relatively low female participation in science in the past and present, as well as presenting “positive” and stimulating female role-models.”

One gender relevant project (call 4) investigates the issue of the incorporation of ethics in S&T policy in terms of the methodologies used and their actual impact in decision making. The proposer states that *“gender is undisputedly a main differentiating factor in identifying the content and direction of ethical considerations.”*

A gender relevant project from call 19 explores the role of Civil Society Organisations as actors in the European system of research and innovation. The proposal states (in a footnote) that there are differences in health diagnosis and treatment between the two sexes, and this factor needs to be taken into account for each research project.

The proportion of projects that recognise the existence of gendered structures, systems and/or constructs is 9%. Overall, the first calls issued under Science and Society contained more projects where gendered structures, systems and/or constructs were identified, while in the calls 13 up to 20 no gender relevant projects were found that recognise the existence of gendered structures, systems and/or constructs.

One gender relevant project proposal (call 5, different as the one stated above) claims that the choice of education is gendered, as *“parents choose different types of education for their children according to whether the child is a boy or girl.”*

From the above we can conclude that there are important differences in the understanding of gender on the part of the researchers. Gender specific projects show a much more complex understanding of gender issues than what can be recognised in the other (gender relevant) projects and thus hold a significantly higher potential for gender change. While an important proportion of the projects working on gender relevant themes still indicate understandings and recognitions of inequalities on the part of their researchers, the absence of insights into the mechanisms that may reproduce or alter gender inequalities hamper their transformative potential.

Integration of gender in the project design

The projects were analysed with regard to their design in terms of the research cycle. The reasoning

behind this exercise is that gender can only truly be addressed in a research project when it is fully embedded in the project cycle: taken into account in the formulation of research objectives, when activities and corresponding inputs are foreseen to ensure the realisation of these objectives, and when reflected in outputs and ultimately also in intended impacts of the project.

This analysis looks at different components and stages of the project and indicates whether gender is mentioned or taken into account in: the abstract of the proposal (which includes the project's main objectives), the inputs (human resources or documentation) the project activities, the expected outputs (results, findings) and in the intended impacts. This analysis is not relevant for the gender specific projects which have by definition integrated gender in their project design and score almost 100% positively on all these aspects.

Integrating gender in the project activities is what most projects do. This is the case for 41 projects out of the 56 gender relevant projects, which corresponds to the share of projects that treat gender in their proposal. It is on other aspects of the design that results are lower, which is a sign of lack of real integration of gender, and illustrates the risk that activities are not really embedded in the project. Still, eleven of these 56 projects (or nearly one in five) have taken the gender dimension into account in the description of their intended impacts.

Of the nineteen gender relevant projects that were considered as 'gender integrated', eleven still did not integrate gender in the description of their intended impacts.

The chart that follows gives the results for the 56 gender relevant projects in the sample.

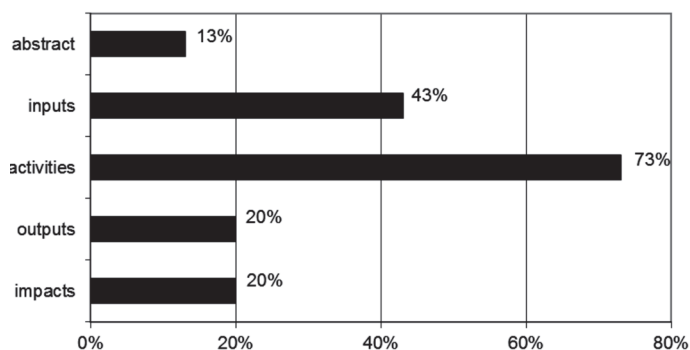


Figure 5.1: Integration of gender in project design; proportion of 'Science and Society' gender relevant projects that integrate gender in which part of the project design (N=56)

In summary, only a minority of gender relevant projects comprehensively integrate gender in their project design. Of those who treat gender in their proposal (79%), nine out of ten have foreseen actions in their activities, while half of these have foreseen inputs and only one fourth describes outputs. In the absence of inputs or outputs, the adequacy and usefulness of the integration of gender in the project can be questioned.

Project categorisation

Based on the above analysis, a conclusive categorisation of all projects was made that brings to the forefront the variability in how researchers have addressed gender in their projects.

Table 5.13: Categorisation of projects based on how gender is addressed (N=75)

	No. of projects	% of total
Gender is relevant and may be mentioned, but is not addressed	25	33%
Gender integrated	19	25%
Gender specific	19	25%
Gender blind	10	13%
Gender is not mentioned, but is only indirectly relevant	2	3%

Table 5.13 gives the categorisation for the full sample. When the gender specific projects are excluded, it appears that 1 out of 3 projects can be considered as “gender integrated”. This is a high score, which however hides important differences in the extent and quality to which gender is dealt with in the project. As all projects in S&S are considered as gender relevant, it is not surprising that only 2 projects were categorised in the group “gender not mentioned but only indirectly relevant”.

In nearly half of the gender relevant projects, gender is assessed as ‘mentioned but not addressed’. This can be seen as an indication of lip service, possibly to hide away incapacity to adequately deal with gender. Anyhow, this important proportion of projects not addressing gender leaves a significant potential for change unexploited, and for transforming (part of) this group into gender integrated projects specific measures would be needed.

Looking at the sex of the coordinators in this conclusive categorisation of the projects, we see that nearly half of the gender integrated projects is coordinated by a woman, whereas the share of female coordinators in the total sample of projects is significantly lower (37%), and that two of the gender blind projects are coordinated by a woman. This observation (again) confirms that the projects set up by women are more likely to be gender sensitive.

5.4.2. Social Sciences and Humanities (Priority 7)

The gender dimension in the research content

As indicated before, the work started from the assumption that all projects submitted in the Social Sciences and Humanities domain are per definition gender relevant. Excluding the four gender specific projects, which logically address gender more comprehensively, the approach that has been taken to gender in the proposals has been analysed and the results are presented in table 5.14. This table illustrates that while most gender relevant projects do mention gender somewhere in their proposal as a relevant variable (as indicated above), there are many less that really address it in their work.

Table 5.14: The approach taken to gender in the gender relevant projects of Priority 7 (N=86)

	Number	%
Sex disaggregation in statistics	6	7%
Acknowledgement of specific characteristics of women / identification of gender issues to be addressed	29	34%
The recognition of gender differences in roles or responsibilities which might be inter-related (gender relations)	34	40%
The recognition of inequalities	30	35%
The recognition of gendered structures or systems (how the differences are (re-)produced or altered)	25	29%
The recognition of gender constructs	8	9%
Gender not mentioned	5	6%

The most common approach to gender (in 40% of the projects who do not have gender as their main focus) is the recognition of differences between the sexes in relation to certain topics being studied (e.g. that women and men demonstrate different forms of violent behaviour). About one third of the proposals recognise gender inequalities (e.g. that women are more likely than men to occupy non-standard forms of employment, which puts limitations to their economic independence), and/or acknowledge that there are specific issues associated with one sex (e.g. that women in their role of mothers play a significant role in the transmission of aspects of culture to next generations).

In nearly one out of three proposals (in 29%) gendered structures or systems are identified, i.e. the structures and systems that (re-)produce or can alter gender inequalities. Some examples of such structures that have been recognised are:

- Σ> apparently neutral policies with different impacts on women and men (in a NoE on European private law);
- Σ> recruitment, retention and promotion policies in organisations (in a proposal for a STREP that investigates professional knowledge in the health and education sectors);
- Σ> the role of culture (art, language, ...) in reinforcing gender images (in a NoE on European history and its relation to the future research agenda);
- Σ> the gender division of labour (in a SSA on a dialogue between social scientists and non-academic actors);
- Σ> education and its impact on employability at older ages (in an IP on European welfare state interventions).

Only eight proposals identified gender constructs, in that they recognised that key concepts used are fundamentally gendered. Examples are : 'part-time work'; certain professions like 'teaching' and 'nursing'; 'the public sphere'; the discourse on 'universal human rights'; the concept of 'citizenship'; 'parenthood'.

Sex-disaggregated statistics have only been provided in six proposals.

Important to note is that the majority of these projects that do address gender still do so only partially in their work, recognising that gender is a relevant variable to particular aspects of the study and to particular components of the work programme but overlooking or ignoring the gender relevance in other parts. This observation can be seen as an indication of a lack of understanding on the part of the researchers of how gender relates to their research, as well as a lack of capacity on how to adequately and comprehensively integrate gender in a research project. The observation also seems to contradict the argument that resistance to gender is at play, because the uptake of gender signals a willingness on the part of the researchers to contribute to the realisation of the gender objectives. Indeed, as there is evidence that efforts have been made to take up gender issues, there must be other reasons for a not fully adequate approach to gender.

Some examples are given below.

The proposal of a CIT1 NoE on 'international migration, integration and social cohesion in Europe' mentions gender as criterion in relation to one work package on 'social integration and mobility, education, housing and health', but the gender dimension of other topics such as 'legal status, citizenship and political integration' is not mentioned.

In a CIT2 project (a STREP), the research subject is 'participatory governance and institutional innovation', and the work is focussed on five selected 'politics of life' areas: medicine, health, food, energy and environment. While gender is recognised in the proposal as being a relevant variable in 'participatory praxis', it is only considered in the work on the 'food' area, but missing in other key work packages. There is e.g. no consideration of gender in the description of the work related to the discourse regarding human embryonic stem cell research and therapeutic cloning, or regarding genetic testing.

In a CIT4 project (IP) aiming to demonstrate that linguistic diversity and multilingualism in the EU are assets for the creation of a knowledge based society states that 'gender will be considered as a socio-linguistic variable' in the project. The potential or existing differences between the sexes in access to language education, linguistic competencies, multi-lingualism are ignored.

A STREP project in CIT5 on youth as actor of social change investigates three thematic areas: young parenthood, transitions to work, and civic participation. In these areas, 'gender' is integrated to different degrees. It is largely missing from the area dealing with civic participation.

On the other hand, there are also projects where gender is really embedded in the research

design and work and that can serve as examples of good practice. Some examples are given below.

A CIT2 project (with a female coordinator): a coordination action on human rights violations. The project investigates various types of interpersonal violence and how these are interrelated or co-occurring, which are the causes and potential protective mechanisms. In this, the research looks i.a. at violence against and by women, but also at men as perpetrators and as victims.

Another CIT2 CA studying the insecure perspectives of the low skilled in the labour market distinguishes four variables in relation to 'low skilled' among which gender, as well as the occurrence of combinations of these factors. It considers 'part time work' as a gendered construct.

A NoE under CIT3 focussing on the role of the EU in 'global governance', regionalisation and regulation fully integrates gender in its research design. Resources are made available and measures are foreseen to ensure the consideration of gender issues: a gender issues officer, a workshop on 'gender', the integration of gender in the work packages. One of the issues that will be studied is e.g. the gendered knowledge production in the economic transformation that is entailed by the globalisation process. This project has however a serious underrepresentation of women in the team (five out of 44 persons representing the members of the partnership). The coordinator is male.

An IP (with a female coordinator) under CIT4 sets out to undertake a micro level analysis of violent mass conflicts. Gender is embedded in the research design, and various relevant gender issues are identified, e.g. different gender roles in situations of conflict, gender identities being manipulated before and during violent conflicts, the need for the inclusion of women's voices in peace negotiations.

In a CIT5 project (a STREP with a female coordinator) on social quality of work and life, gender is fully integrated. The project will analyse whether, to what extent and how gender matters in the relationship between well-being and public and organisational policies. All analyses will also be broken down by gender.

In these projects that adequately embed gender in their research, gender issues are treated as an integral constituent element in the research questions and hypotheses and are followed upon throughout the research design, from the planning through implementation to outputs and intended impacts.

Integration of gender in the project design

As was done for the Science and Society projects, the Priority 7 proposals were also analysed with regard to their project design. It has been verified whether gender is mentioned or taken into account in the different stages of the project cycle: the abstract of the proposal (which includes the project's main objectives), the project inputs (human or other), the project activities, the expected outputs (results, findings) and the intended impacts. As indicated before, the argument behind this approach is that an adequate integration of gender in a research project requires that it is duly considered in all stages of the project cycle.

Figure 5.2 shows where gender was mentioned as relevant variable in the project design for the gender-relevant projects.

The inputs referred to are in most cases human resources inputs, where members of the team have gender expertise or where a specific person is to be appointed as responsible for the integration of gender considerations in the project.

Where gender is included in the activities, this is in the vast majority of the cases as a relevant variable in the work to be performed in one or more of the work packages, as a criterion in the selection of samples for interviews, case studies or as criterion in the analyses.

Less than half of the gender-relevant proposals (44%) mentions gender in relation to outputs, referring in most cases to findings or study results relating to gender to be incorporated in reports. However, a few proposals also indicated deliverables that would be entirely devoted to gender.

Four projects in the sample are gender-specific. All four projects have a female coordinator and gender is completely integrated ('embedded') into the project design of these projects. They were not submitted under a gender-specific call (there was none in the SSH field), although gender-relevant topics were identified in the calls. This observation brings to the fore that the explicitation of gender relevant topics in work programmes and calls does make space for gender-specific research, even without calls for gender-specific research. In other words, the explicit mentioning of gender-relevant topics appears to be an incentive for researchers to submit proposals for gender-specific research projects.

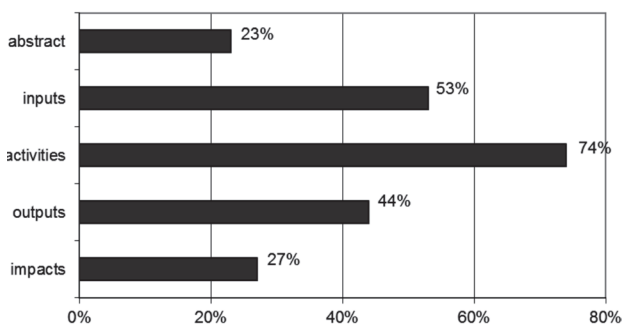


Figure 5.2: The integration of gender in the project design (gender-relevant projects, Priority7, N=86)

The main themes of the gender-specific projects in the sample are indicated below.

- A CIT4 IP on 'quality in gender+ equality policies' has as its objective to bring together and construct the knowledge needed for inclusive gender+ equality policies.
- Another CIT4 IP with as research subject 'gendered citizenship in Multicultural Europe', sets out to construct a model of gendered citizenship based on the contribution of women's movements in developing citizenship practices and policies.
- A STREP under CIT5 deals with 'the relation between major ageing and gender issues in Europe'. The project seeks to reveal gender gaps and their factors by identifying and analysing indicators of quality of life among the population aged 65+.
- Another CIT5 STREP proposal with as research subject 'the debates, conflicts and regulations about Female Muslim headscarves in Europe' has as main objectives to compare the fundamental values and political principles expressed in the debates, and to explain the differences and similarities in the conflicting values as expressed in the policies on Muslim headscarves across European countries.

The above has shown the variable and often incomplete integration of gender in the project cycle: the vast majority of the projects did not address gender as a staged process. Even when up to three quarters of the gender-relevant projects claim that gender will be taken up in the activities, it is not likely that this will yield results when no inputs are foreseen (as is the case for nearly half of the projects). The gender-specific projects form an (unsurprising) exception to this fact.

Project categorisation

As mentioned before, given the nature of Priority 7 (Social Sciences and Humanities), a presumption of the study has been that all projects are 'gender relevant'. Despite this gender relevance of all research topics, there were 23 out of the 90 projects in the sample that did mention gender without effectively addressing it. Four projects were gender blind (they did not even contain a reference to 'gender'), and three projects did not mention gender, while gender could indeed be considered as of indirect relevance only. These are all smaller projects: a CIT5 project dealing with 'firms that are created around scientific knowledge generated in public research organisations', a CIT6 project dealing with 'modern Mediterranean architecture' and another CIT6 project about 'tax treaty law'.

Four of the 90 selected projects were gender-specific. The remaining 56 projects integrated gender, albeit to different degrees.

The table below presents the number of projects according to the treatment of gender for the six parts under Priority 7. In interpreting these figures, one must take into account that CIT1, CIT3 and CIT4 were reserved for IPs and NoEs – for which a Gender Action Plan was mandatory, CIT2 and CIT5 were open for STREPs and CAs, and CIT6 was reserved for SSA, for which a Gender Action Plan was not mandatory.

Table 5.15: Treatment of gender in selected Priority 7 projects (N=90)

	CIT1	CIT2	CIT3	CIT4	CIT5	CIT6	No.	%
Gender blind	-	-	-	-	3	1	4	4%
Gender not mentioned, but only indirectly relevant	-	-	-	-	1	2	3	3%
Gender is relevant and mentioned, but not addressed	3	2	2	1	12	3	23	26%
Gender-integrated	2	13	13	9	15	4	56	62%
Gender specific	-	-	-	2	2	-	4	4%
Total sample	5	15	15	12	33	10	90	100%

As can be seen in the above table, the proportion of proposals where gender is either the focus of the work, or where it is – to a certain extent – integrated is quite high (nearly seven out of ten projects). This is clearly an enhancement in comparison to FP5⁷⁵ and can be considered as a positive result from the efforts made by the Commission in FP6, formally requiring the consideration of gender issues by the proposers.

Still, one out of three proposals did not address gender (30 out of 90 sampled projects), four of these being completely gender-blind. Although gender was mentioned in 23 of these proposals, it has not been taken into account in the project inputs or activities, the references made to gender apparently being mere lip-service. CIT5 and CIT6 contained the highest share of projects not addressing gender, indicating an apparent deterioration in the quality of the projects where gender is concerned towards the end of the Framework Programme period, which might be an indication that project holders had realised that the gender-related requirements in FP6 were not so strict altogether.

For the projects considered as ‘gender-integrated’, it is relevant to also consider the depth or ‘completeness’ of this integration of the gender dimension by verifying in which stages of the project cycle gender is treated as a relevant variable. Indeed, while in about one third of the projects gender is effectively fully embedded in the project design, the integration of gender has been rather meagre in other projects. This is illustrated by table 5.16, which shows in absolute numbers and in percentages where gender was mentioned as relevant variable in the project design for the gender-integrated projects only. The results shown shown in table 5.16 clearly indicate that in the majority of the ‘gender-integrated’ proposals, where gender is effectively addressed to some extent, the project design reflects that the gender dimension is still not completely integrated into all stages of the project cycle.

⁷⁵ The final report from the FP5 Gender Impact Assessment study by Dr. Mary Braithwaite indicates that in the ‘Socio-Economic Knowledge Key Action’ only one out of five projects could be considered gender-integrated.

Table 5.16: The integration of gender in the project design (gender-integrated projects, N=56)

	Number	%
In the abstract of the proposal	20	36 %
In the inputs	38	68 %
In the activities	53	95 %
In the planned outputs	35	63 %
In the intended impacts	22	39 %

Looking at the sex of the coordinators, 19 of the 23 projects where gender is mentioned but not addressed are coordinated by men. This observation is consistent for both Priority 7 calls (6 out of 7 projects not addressing gender were coordinated by men under the first call; and 13 out of 16 projects under the second call). One explanation for this observation could be that men have more difficulties in seeing the gender relevance for their project. As it is arguable whether men would be less capable than women to understand the gender relevance in relation to their research subject, another maybe more plausible explanation could be that in those projects where gender is mentioned but not addressed, resistance could be at play.

Table 5.17: Treatment of gender in selected Priority 7 projects, by sex of coordinator (N=90)

	Coordinator		Total sample	% of total
	male	female		
Gender integrated	39	17	56	62%
Gender is relevant and mentioned, but not addressed	19	4	23	26%
Gender specific	-	4	4	4%
Gender blind	3	1	4	4%
Gender not mentioned, but only indirectly relevant	2	1	3	3%
Total	63 (70%)	27 (30%)	90	

There are interesting variations between the thematic areas. Of the 27 proposals that are either gender blind or where gender is mentioned but not addressed, seven are from the first thematic area 'Improving the generation, distribution and use of knowledge and its impact on economic and social development' (out of the 12 projects in this area analysed), and eight are from area 8 'Actions to promote the ERA in SSH' (out of the 15 analysed).

These are high proportions (more than one in two), indicating that for these areas the gender relevance of the topics has been less obvious for the applicants, and most likely for the evaluators and projects officers as well (otherwise they would have been expected to recommend improvements from the proposers).

Table 5.18: Projects where gender was not addressed (gender blind or ‘relevant and mentioned but not addressed’) by research area of Priority 7 (N=27)

Research Area	Projects reviewed	Gender mentioned but not addressed	Gender blind
Research Area 1 : Improving the generation, distribution and use of knowledge and its impact on economic and social development	12	7	-
Research Area 2 : Options and choices for the development of a knowledge-based society	18	1	-
Research Area 3 : The variety of paths towards a knowledge society	7	-	2
Research Area 4 : The implications of European integration and enlargement for governance and the citizen	7	3	-
Research Area 5 : Articulation of areas of responsibility and new forms of governance	9	3	-
Research Area 6 : Issues connected with the resolution of conflicts and restoration of peace and justice	8	2	-
Research Area 7 : New forms of citizenship and cultural identities	14	1	-
Research Area 8 : Actions to promote the ERA in SSH	15	6	2
Total	90	23	4

Six projects were identified using the Integrated Project (IP) or Network of Excellence (NoE) instruments where gender quite obviously was mentioned in the Gender Action Plan (or GAP, which was mandatory for the IPs and NoEs, the biggest instruments in FP6), but where gender was considered as not addressed in the project. The reasons for this assessment have been that the GAP either contained statements of ‘intentions’ and/or that not a single element contained in the GAP was integrated in the other parts of the proposal, where one would have expected them to be mentioned (e.g. under the detailed description of the activities to be undertaken, the tools to be used or the deliverables).

In two of these six cases (one CIT1 and one CIT4 project), the GAP only contains elements as to female participation and equal opportunities, while in the whole proposal no issues of gender relevance connected with the research subject are identified. Although gender was mentioned in these proposals, the projects were categorised as ‘gender blind’ where their research subject is concerned. In these cases, a shrunk understanding of the gender equality goal in FP6 is noted.

The CIT1 project (coordinated by a woman) deals with efficient and democratic governance in Europe: the ‘concept’ of democracy and representation, ways and means

of enhancing democracy, gains and challenges of including civil society in governance, democratic norms of equal rights. While the gender relevance is obvious, this is not considered in the proposal. The GAP only mentions: *“We will encourage the inclusion and development of research topics investigating or accounting for the gender dimension of European governance.”*

The CIT4 project (also coordinated by a woman) aims to demonstrate that the linguistic diversity in Europe is potentially an asset rather than an obstacle. It points out that one of the preconditions for this to occur is that citizens become multilingual, foreign languages being one of the most important ‘new basic skills’ citizens need to acquire to take part in the creation of a European knowledge based society. The project fails to identify any gender issues related to this subject, while it would make sense to analyse any differences between the sexes in terms of opportunity for and access to language education and multilingualism.

In summary, the proportion of ‘gender integrated’ projects under Priority 7 is quite high (three out of five), which is a positive observation and a clear improvement in comparison to FP5. Looking back at how FP6 came to being (see section 1.4.) and how it was planned (as analysed in Chapter 3), it can be concluded that this positive result can be attributed to the emphasis put on gender by the Commission in FP6. Still, the extent to which gender is addressed varies significantly: a majority of the projects demonstrates an incomplete understanding and treatment of the gender dimension, and one out of four projects does not address gender at all. This clearly indicates a lack of capacity on the part of the researchers. While on the part of the evaluators and the project officers, who could have pinpointed these shortcomings in order to enhance the consideration of gender in the projects, incapacity may also have been at play. At the same time, the absence of any incentive or accountability measure should not be overlooked. The latter may explain why, looking at the whole FP6 period, there has been deterioration towards the end of the period.

Follow-up of activity reports: effective integration during project implementation?

The most recent activity reports were analysed for the sampled projects of the first Priority 7 call (with three parts: CIT1, CIT2 and CIT3). The aim of the review was to assess the extent to which gender-related tasks are effectively implemented in the project, and to compare such findings with what was originally put forward in the project proposal.

For most of the projects, the most recent report available at the time of this research was the second year reporting. In total, the activity reports of 33 projects were reviewed, as two were not available: five from CIT1 (out of 5 sampled projects), 14 from CIT2 (out of 15 sampled projects) and 14 from CIT3 (out of 15 sampled projects).

In CIT1, under which Integrated Projects and Networks of Excellence are funded, three out

of the five activity reports do not mention (1 activity report) or address gender (2 activity reports). This corresponds to how these projects were categorised in terms of their integration of gender, based on the proposal (included as technical annex to their contract with the Commission): as 'gender is relevant and mentioned, but not addressed'.

One NoE where gender was considered as poorly integrated in the project proposal, does seem to achieve some progress in the activity report, and can thus be regarded as integrating to some extent: a paper on 'Gender, Migration and the European Labour Market' has been written and the gender balance in the team is taken into account.

For the fifth CIT1 activity report, where gender is to some extent integrated in the proposal, the assessment is confirmed. The activity report mentions plans to produce an output concerning gender: a 'Working Paper on Gender Values and the Calculation of Risk' is due.

Within CIT2 (intended for smaller projects, namely Specific Targeted Research Projects and Coordination Actions), five out of the fourteen activity reports show a good integration of gender into the project activities, corresponding to what was put forward in the project proposal. Of these five gender-integrated projects, gender is fully embedded in four projects and integrated to some extent in the fifth project.

On the other hand, for six projects where gender was not addressed or poorly integrated into the project design as described in the proposal, gender is only briefly (four activity reports) or not at all mentioned (two activity reports) in the activity reports. This confirms the initial assessment.

Of the three remaining CIT2 projects where gender was considered integrated to some extent based on the proposal, gender is only briefly mentioned in two activity reports and not mentioned at all in the third activity report.

Within CIT3, addressed at Integrated Projects and Networks of Excellence, five out of the fourteen activity reports reveal a good integration of gender into the project activities, corresponding to what was put forward in the project proposal. Of these five activity reports, gender is embedded in three project proposals and is integrated to some extent in two project proposals.

Of five projects where gender was not addressed or only poorly integrated into the proposal, two activity reports briefly mention gender and three activity reports do not mention gender at all.

For the remaining four projects, there are some signs of the consideration of gender in the project activities, although these are not always convincing, as can be seen in the example below.

An IP project (with a female coordinator) focusing on 'the contribution system of the educational system to lifelong learning', states that "the final report will pay specific attention to the issue of gender inequality", whereas gender has not yet been addressed in the project activities.

Table 5.19 shows, for each of the reviewed projects, how the reading of the activity report in terms of gender compares with the assessment of the project based on the proposal. As such, the project implementation is assessed in the light of what the project planning promised.

Table 5.19: Gender in the activity reports compared to the project proposal for CIT1 – CIT2 and CIT3 projects

Project ⁷⁶	Instru- ment	Integration of gender in the project (based on proposal)	Activity Report	Integration of gender in activities (based on activity report)	Assess- ment
CIT1 (N=5)					
1.	NoE	Poorly integrated	Gender is included in output and the gender balance considered.	Integrated to some extent	↑
2.	IP	Integrated to some extent	Gender is mentioned, but the implementation of it could be better.	Integrated to some extent	=
3.	NoE	Mentioned, but not addressed	Gender is not mentioned, only the GAP is mentioned.	Not addressed	=
4.	IP	Mentioned, but not addressed	No mention of gender	Not addressed	↓
5.	NoE	Mentioned, but not addressed	Only two women left in Executive Committee instead of eight.	Not addressed	=
CIT2 (N=14)					
a)	CA	Embedded	Gender is well integrated in the project activities, but the progress could be higher.	Embedded	=
b)	STREP	Poorly integrated	Mention 'GAP' for the first time, as no GAP was added to the proposal.	Not addressed	↓
c)	STREP	Integrated to some extent	Gender is not addressed in the project activities or results	Poorly integrated	↓

⁷⁶ Following the European Commission's request, no project acronyms were used to report on study results. However, where a same reference is used for projects in different sections of this work, these do refer to the same project.

Table 5.19: Continued

Project	Instru- ment	Integration of gender in the project (based on proposal)	Activity Report	Integration of gender in activities (based on activity report)	Assess- ment
d)	STREP	Poorly integrated	Gender is only mentioned once in one output.	Poorly integrated	=
e)	STREP	Integrated to some extent	Gender is only mentioned in the aims.	Poorly integrated	↓
f)	STREP	Poorly integrated	No mention of gender	Not addressed	↓
g)	CA	Embedded	Gender is well integrated in the project activities.	Embedded	=
h)	STREP	Poorly integrated	Gender is only mentioned in the objectives.	Not addressed	↓
i)	STREP	Poorly integrated	No mention of gender	Not addressed	↓
j)	STREP	Integrated to some extent	No mention of gender	Not addressed	↓
k)	STREP	Not addressed	Gender is mentioned once in the paper of a guest author called 'Gender discourse in development'.	Poorly integrated	↑
l)	STREP	Embedded	Gender is well integrated in the project activities.	Embedded	↑
m)	STREP	Embedded	Gender is well integrated in the project activities, but the progress could be higher.	Embedded	=
n)	STREP	Integrated to some extent	Gender is well integrated in the project activities, but the progress could be higher.	Integrated to some extent	=
CIT3 (N=14)					
6.	IP	Integrated to some extent	Gender is well integrated in the project activities.	Integrated to some extent	=
7.	IP	Embedded	Gender is well integrated in the project activities.	Embedded	=

Table 5.19: Continued

Project	Instru- ment	Integration of gender in the project (based on proposal)	Activity Report	Integration of gender in activities (based on activity report)	Assess- ment
8.	IP	Poorly integrated	Gender is integrated in the project activities, but the progress could be better.	Poorly integrated	=
9.	NoE	Embedded	Gender is well integrated in the project activities.	Embedded	=
10.	NoE	Integrated to some extent	Gender is integrated in the project activities, but the progress could be better.	Integrated to some extent	=
11.	NoE	Poorly integrated	No mention of gender	Not mentioned	↓
13.	NoE	Not addressed	Gender is briefly mentioned regarding women's participation in the project.	Not addressed	=
14.	NoE	Poorly integrated	Gender is only mentioned once: gender dimension should be included.	Not addressed	↓
15.	IP	Poorly integrated	No mention of gender	Not mentioned	↓
16.	IP	Mentioned, but not addressed	No mention of gender	Not mentioned	↓
17.	NoE	Integrated to some extent	Gender is integrated in the project activities, but the progress could be better.	Integrated to some extent	=
18.	IP	Integrated to some extent	Gender is integrated in the project activities.	Integrated to some extent	=
19.	NoE	Embedded	Gender is well integrated in the project activities.	Embedded	=
20.	NoE	Integrated to some extent	Gender is integrated in the project activities, but the progress could be better.	Integrated to some extent	=

What can be learnt from comparing the project design and the implementation? Overall, the analysis of the activity reports confirms the findings of the gender assessment made on the basis of the technical annex for a majority of the cases. In 18 of the 33 cases, the assessment remains the same.

For 12 projects, the assessment on the basis of the activity report is worse than what the technical annex indicated. These are mostly projects that were assessed as ‘poorly integrating gender’ or ‘mentioning, while not addressing gender’ that eventually prove not to address gender at all when verifying their activity reports. What was put forward in the proposal appears to have been mere lip-service.

In 3 of the 33 cases, the activity report gives a better impression about the integration of gender in the project than what the technical annex had led to believe.

The analysis of the activity reports seems to indicate that for a majority of cases, little extra attention is paid to gender by the project holders during the execution: the trend is an equal or worse assessment of how gender is addressed in the project. Only in exceptional cases, the activity report indicates a better treatment of gender than what appeared from the technical annex. This observation is a, somewhat alarming, sign that also the project officers have largely ignored projects’ performance in terms of gender issues. The responsibility of the project officers in terms of overall gender achievements of FR6 can therefore not be denied. At the same time, there did not seem to be any accountability structures in place with respect to this aspect of project officers’ role when monitoring projects. And, in the absence of corrective interventions by project officers, there have not been accountability mechanisms towards the project holders either, which most likely explains why a number of projects have done less in terms of gender than what was promised in their proposal.

Still, all in all, for 17 of the 33 reviewed cases, the analysis of the activity reports has revealed that some actions are (said to be) undertaken in terms of gender, which remains a significant improvement in comparison to FP5. This result should at least be recognised for its awareness-raising effect within the research community, even if the integration of gender within most of these projects has been far from flawless.

5.5. Science and Society reporting

All FP6 project holders were expected to complete an online questionnaire about the ‘Science and Society’ issues in their project. Through this questionnaire, information was collected by the European Commission on how the project dealt with the issues ‘ethics’, ‘gender’, ‘science education, training and career development’, ‘engaging with actors beyond the research community’ and ‘use and dissemination’ (of research results). As ‘gender’ was one of the issues to be reported upon, also these submitted questionnaires have been reviewed in order to complement the information collected through the activity reports (discussed in the previous section) and GAP Implementation Reports (as analysed in section 6.4). Indeed, the section on gender in this so-called ‘Science and Society reporting questionnaire’ did not have to be completed by the Integrated Projects and Networks of Excellence, as these had to report

separately on the implementation of their Gender Action Plan (GAP) by means of an online GAP Implementation Report.

By May 2007⁷⁷, only for 13 Science and Society projects the ‘Science and Society Reporting Questionnaire’ was available in SESAM (the electronic reporting system used by the Commission), and not a single completed ‘Science and Society Reporting Questionnaire’ of the smaller projects funded under Priority 7 (Coordination Actions, Specific Support Actions or Specific Targeted Research Projects). There were 13 such questionnaires available for Integrated Projects and Networks of Excellence, but with the section on ‘gender’ logically left blank.

The review of these questionnaires learnt that the questionnaires in general, and the section on gender in particular, had been completed and responses provided by project holders in a very brief, mostly superficial way. Moreover, as the section on gender contained only 3 closed questions, hardly any relevant information could be retrieved from the 13 submitted questionnaires, which significantly affected the use that could be made (at least of this section) of the questionnaire.

5.6. Conclusions on mainstreaming gender in the projects

As in the previous chapters, the starting point for the analysis of the gender mainstreaming implementation at the project level is to first pinpoint where variability and unevenness have occurred, and then to see how these can be explained in terms of the factors set out in Chapter two: has a confusion or misunderstanding on concepts played a role, were one or more key conditions for effective gender mainstreaming not fulfilled, has resistance been manifested, and how have the EC organisational features impeded a better gender mainstreaming implementation?

This chapter has looked at the integration of gender considerations in the projects, both in terms of their design and in their implementation, looking at women’s participation and at gender in the content.

Across the board, the research shows that the approach taken to gender in FP6 has brought about real results: the share of gender-integrated projects has risen significantly in comparison to FP5 (in the area of socio-economic sciences, the share of gender-integrated projects tripled from FP5 to FP6) and the awareness-raising effect in the research community has been substantial. Still, the uptake of gender issues and the efforts undertaken by the actors have been *uneven*: some were substantial (gender-specific projects were submitted and approved for funding under Priority 7 even in the absence of gender-specific calls, examples of projects were identified that had comprehensively embedded gender in their project design and implementation), many were lip service (gender being mentioned in the proposal, but not

⁷⁷ This is towards the end of the empirical research period, which ran from 2004 till mid 2007.

integrated in the project planning). The research shows this is the case not only among the applicants, but also among the proposal evaluators (who tended to ignore the gender dimension if gender issues were not mentioned in the proposal, although exceptions were identified who did point out the projects' shortcomings in terms of gender when gender was not addressed in the proposal) and project officers within the European Commission (who, in general, did not seem to have adequately followed up the projects' performances in terms of gender).

This uneven uptake and the variable efforts are noticeable in various respects. Projects showed a better integration of gender issues where the formal framework programme provisions (work programme and call topics) specified gender and/or identified specific topics with gender relevance. Some themes' and topics' gender relevance also appeared clearer than others', and this reflected in how gender was addressed in the project contents.

Several more elements of *variability* were found. Where projects undertook to consider gender issues, the tendency has been towards focussing on women's participation (the 'counting heads' phenomenon), whereas 'the gender dimension of the research content' appeared more difficult to grasp and was consequently less addressed. A noteworthy difference has been noted between female and male project coordinators: female coordinators are more likely than their male counterparts to integrate gender issues in their proposal, to put in place a gender balanced team, to foresee gender expertise in the team and to foresee structural provisions in their project design so that gender can be tackled. Gender issues have been addressed in the projects in variable ways: often in a fragmented way (for example, partly considered in the research activities, but not in the research hypotheses, not in the resources, nor in the planned outputs), sometimes in a comprehensive way, embedded in the project cycle. This finding concerns the staged approach to gender that was followed (or not) in the projects, and is consistent with the marked difference that has been found between the proposals / technical annexes (corresponding to the project planning stage) and the project reporting (corresponding to the project implementation stage), the latter clearly showing a (much) weaker consideration of gender issues than appeared from the proposal. This is a clear sign of 'evaporation': of gender-related promises not being kept, at least in part due to the fact that these commitments were not strictly followed up by the EC project officers. Lastly, *unevenness* has been identified also in time: a deterioration of how gender was dealt with was noticeable towards the end of FP6 (more clearly so in the Social Sciences and Humanities domain than in Science and Society).

How can this variability and unevenness be explained? Considering whether there might have been problems with the understanding of the gender equality goal under FP6, the absence can be noted of an explicit formulation of the transformative goal of the gender policy in FP6. Still, as we have seen that a large share of the proposals does integrate gender in their planning to some extent, it does not seem that this lack of an explicit transformative aim, nor ambiguity on the meaning of terms explain the overall rather disappointing results in

terms of gender mainstreaming in the projects. Rather, a lack of capacity among all actors, notably to understand how gender may relate to their research subject and to adequately integrate gender into the different stages of their project cycle, is a more likely explanation. The analysis performed of the research projects in the 'Science in Society' and 'Social Sciences and Humanities' parts of FP6, suggests that the absence of accompanying measures, notably for awareness-raising and capacity building, targeting the various actors involved in the process is an important explanatory factor for the shortcomings in projects' gender approach. It is especially interesting to see that the projects (with a few exceptions) have not addressed gender as a 'staged process' in their projects (a requirement which could have been pointed out had capacity-building been undertaken) and that their fragmented approach (notably when no resources are planned for the implementation of gender-related activities) partly explains the fact that results remain below expectations.

The approach taken by the EC to gender mainstreaming in FP6 has been a continuation of the earlier policy choice of encouraging research with, for and about women, and aimed at improving the structural provisions for gender mainstreaming planned at the framework programme level, based on the lessons learnt from FP5. It did not break in any way with the earlier gender in research policy, but showed a consistent path. As such, it can be concluded that capacity for gender mainstreaming was fostered and growing at the EC framework programme level. However, while a new tool, the Gender Action Plan (or GAP) was developed and introduced to support the integration of gender issues in the largest projects (see Chapter 6), no specific accompanying measures were taken to raise awareness for gender issues among those (interested in) taking part in the Framework Programme. Neither were capacity-building efforts for any of the actors undertaken. On top of this, the electronic reporting system which should have served the monitoring of the projects' performances, including in terms of gender, has not been fully functional, and this was not remedied in the course of the process (as also addressed in Chapter 7). These are all indications that insufficient resources were made available for gender mainstreaming in FP6.

A consequence of this lack of capacity among the actors, in particular to grasp the possible gender issues in relation to the subject of the research to be undertaken, and of the non-effective accountability measures has been a shrinking of the consideration of gender in the projects towards a focus on equal opportunities and women's participation.

The research has revealed an evaporation of gender-related commitments at the project level, which in turn has led to 'policy evaporation' as the aggregate result of the disappointing performance of the projects has been that outcomes in terms gender mainstreaming at framework programme level have remained below expectations too. We have identified inconsistencies (in terms of 'equipment' of the actors, in terms of rhetorics versus practice), lack of coherence (between what was expected from applicants and what was followed up later in the process) and lack of structurally embedded resources in the policy implementation framework, and I argue that these are likely explanations for the 'policy evaporation'.

As project officers did not appear to be very demanding on the part of the projects where gender performance was concerned, and were themselves not held accountable for this (too) soft approach, the achievements in terms of gender integration in the projects have gone down as FP6 progressed. This finding suggests that the policy evaporation effect has been reinforced by the lack of accountability structures.

An important finding from the research relates to the role and space of actors to make a difference. The analysis has brought to the fore that projects coordinated by women are in general doing better where the integration of gender in the research design and content is concerned. Also are these projects more likely to have a good gender balance, and to structurally ensure attention for gender issues and equal opportunities. Still, as shown in the previous chapter, success rates of female coordinators do not differ from those of men. This means that, while the projects coordinated by women are more likely to correspond better to the criteria put forward for 'excellent research', this quality does not reflect in higher success rates, which is more than likely a sign of gender bias in the selection of proposals for funding. As pointed out earlier, this can to a large extent be explained by the fact that integration of gender considerations in the project has not been a criterion that was marked during the proposal evaluation stage (which, had it been, should have translated into higher evaluation marks for proposals coordinated by women) – an obvious flaw in the design of the gender policy implementation plan.

The above results indicate that lack of or insufficient performance in terms of gender on the part of the actors – be they researchers, evaluators or project officers – can at least in part be explained by reservations and reluctance because of incapacity, and hence uncertainty, to duly meet the expectations rather than by resistance to gender equality in itself. Especially when considering there were no (or hardly any) 'incentives' in place for doing otherwise, as non-action went largely undiscovered or remained unchallenged.

Still there are some signs that there might exist some 'real' resistance as well. Indeed, as female project coordinators do better in terms of gender in their projects than their male counterparts and as there is no reason to think they were better 'equipped' than men, or suffer less from lack of capacity than men to make their projects gender-sensitive, this does indicate a certain resistance among male project coordinators.

Also, as insufficient resources were put in place for the actors to adequately implement the gender mainstreaming plan in their regular work and as project officers were apparently not instructed by their superiors or given the capacity to duly follow up on the gender dimension in the projects, there is at least a suspicion of resistance on the part of the highest hierarchical levels in the Commission's DG Research.

6. The 'Gender Action Plan': a new gender mainstreaming instrument

While the previous chapter had the funded projects as unit of analysis, the present chapter zooms in even further, taking a closer look at the Gender Action Plan (GAP), a gender mainstreaming instrument that was introduced under FP6 to assist the researchers with the integration of gender in their projects. The overarching aim of this chapter, which deals in detail with the GAP, is to assess its usefulness, effectiveness and added value as a (new) gender mainstreaming instrument under FP6. More specifically, this chapter will search for variability and unevenness in its application, evaluation and implementation. It will clarify the understanding by the researchers of the dual gender equality goal in FP6, thus helping to answer the research question about the conceptualisation of gender equality. It will also try to sort out whether the key conditions were fulfilled, notably as regards the availability of the necessary resources for the use of this instrument and as to the existence of hard incentives. Lastly, the present chapter will contribute to answering the research question that deals with the effect of the institutional features of the EC on the gender mainstreaming implementation.

Let us first consider some basic background information about the 'Gender Action Plan' (GAP). The GAP was introduced as a new tool under FP6 and was mandatory for all Networks of Excellence (NoEs) and Integrated Projects (IPs), which were the 'funding instruments' to be used for the larger-scale projects. On average, an IP project involved 25 participants and received Commission funding of €9.5m over four years, and an NoE involved 30 participants with a Commission contribution of €7.5 over four years (European Commission 2009). To be eligible for funding, each NoE or IP proposal submitted under FP6 had to include a 'Gender Action Plan' in which applicants were expected to indicate the actions and activities they would develop to promote gender equality within the project, and to provide sex-disaggregated data on the workforce involved in the research proposal. Furthermore, applicants were requested to explain whether there are 'gender issues'⁷⁸ associated with the subject of their work and how these gender aspects would be taken into consideration into the research content (European Commission, 2005b). Essentially, a GAP had to provide a diagnosis of the current situation regarding gender issues in relation to the research subject addressed in the proposal and in relation to women's participation in the planned team, as well as a practical plan on how progress was intended to be made.

The GAP, as an integral part of the proposal, had to be assessed by the evaluators who select proposals for funding, although evaluators did not have to give a mark to the GAP.

For the selected projects, the GAP was also included in the technical annex to the contract

⁷⁸ The European Commission in this context uses only the term 'gender', while it can be understood as including 'sex relevant' issues

with the Commission, the implementation of its GAP being part and parcel of the project implementation. As such, the GAP implementation was to be followed up by the ‘project officer’ (the EC’s staff member in charge of administrative matters regarding the project), and had to be reported upon.

6.1. Method and data

The detailed GAP analysis, which is presented in this chapter, is largely based on an in-depth study of the GAPs that were included in those SSH projects for which the GAP instrument was mandatory (Networks of Excellence and Integrated Projects)⁷⁹. The analysis looks at the planning stage and the implementation stage and considers the performance of the project applicants, the EC officials in charge of the contract negotiation and the project holders.

Section two presents the results of the GAP review from the SSH projects as they have been included in the proposals and in the technical annexes to the contracts. This approach allows assessing not only the performance of the project applicants, but also provides insights into the impact of the negotiation, which is the responsibility of EC project officers. Section three compares the quality of the GAP with the gender integration in the project, to verify whether the quality of the GAP is an indicator of the gender-sensitiveness of the project. Section four looks into the implementation of the GAPs.

Considering the scarcity of useable and available data for undertaking an investigation of the usefulness and added value of the GAP as new instrument under FP6, it is fortunate that in addition to my own data, a number of additional sources can be exploited.

With section five, we turn to the findings resulting from a GAP workshop organised by the European Commission with GAP responsible persons from a variety of projects funded under the different FP6 areas. This section is based on the author’s personal notes from that workshop (after the workshop, no minutes have been made available to the participants by the European Commission).

Sections six and seven complement and compare my own findings about the GAP with those of others who have looked into this new instrument: section six presents the findings of the GenderBasic project, and section seven reflects the assessment of the GAP by the external expert panel who evaluated FP6 for the European Commission. The last section presents the conclusions from the GAP analysis.

Before proceeding with the results of the analysis, I present below the analytical framework for the assessment of the quality of the GAPs.

A first point to make relates to the interpretation of what is covered by the ‘Gender Action Plan’. Applicants were asked to include in their proposal a GAP, as well as to write a section on ‘gender issues’ associated with the subject of the research proposal and how these aspects have

⁷⁹ There were no Networks of Excellence or Integrated Projects under the FP6 area ‘Science and Society’.

been taken into consideration. This has led to confusion among applicants as to what exactly needed to be covered under which section. For the purpose of this analysis, both sections have been included in the assessment of the 'GAPs,' considering that the overall quality of the GAP is not depending on whether applicants have (or not) distinguished between both sections in the proposal.

In assessing the quality of the GAPs, the following elements have been taken into account:

- whether and how the GAP addresses the quantitative and qualitative dimension of the gender integration in the project (women's participation and equal opportunities on the one hand, and the contents of the research work on the other hand);
- the extent to which specific issues with particular gender relevance in the subject of the research are identified in the GAP;
- the proposed measures, approaches and resources that are or will be mobilised in the project to effectively address the gender dimension, both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Based on this assessment, the 'GAPs' have been categorised into four groups:

- 'non-GAPs': the (so-called) 'GAPs' contain none of the elements searched for, but only some noncommittal statements, merely for the sake of having a section that can be entitled 'GAP';
- one star (*): poor GAPs that do contain a few relevant elements, but remain superficial and rather noncommittal; not mentioning approaches, measures or means to realise 'intentions';
- two star (**): good quality GAPs that cover most or all of the required elements adequately;
- three star (***) : excellent GAPs that cover all the expected elements, clearly presenting a diagnosis of the situation and concrete approaches and measures as to how the quantitative and qualitative gender issues will be addressed, by which means or which resources will be mobilised to do so.

6.2. Comparative analysis: presence and quality of GAPs in the SSH project proposals and in technical annexes

Reviewing the GAPs has been part of the work performed under the gender monitoring studies that took place under FP6. In what follows, the analysis of the GAPs from all 34 projects in the social sciences and humanities (SSH) field⁸⁰ - the so-called 'Priority 7' under FP6 - is reported upon in detail.

In total, 20 contracts for SSH projects using new instruments were signed under the first call of Priority 7, in which the parts Citizens-1 and Citizens-3 were entirely devoted to Networks

⁸⁰ The Science and Society field had not NoEs or IPs.

of Excellence and Integrated Projects. Under the second call for Priority 7, the part Citizens-4 was open for these two instruments and 14 projects were approved under Citizens-4. The GAPs of all these 34 projects (5 from CIT-1, 15 from CIT-3 and 14 from CIT-4) as they were included in the submitted proposals were reviewed and compared with the 'final' version of these GAPs as included in the technical annex to the contract. The aim of this comparison has been to assess the impact of the negotiation phase on the quality level of the Gender Action Plans.

For CIT1, four out of the five proposals that were retained for funding did contain a Gender Action Plan (GAP), while one did not (although it was a formal requirement). However, this one proposal did contain a short section entitled 'gender issues' in which the existence of a 'gender plan' is mentioned, although this was not included in the proposal. Of the fifteen projects for which contracts were signed under CIT3, thirteen proposals contained a GAP. For CIT4, the proposals of only nine out of the 14 approved projects could be analysed⁸¹. All these nine contained a GAP.

The results from the comparative assessment of the GAPs from the proposals and the technical annexes are shown in the table below. Projects are coded with numbers.

Table 6.1: Quality of GAPs

Project	Instr.	GAP in proposal	GAP in techn. annex (T.A.)	Comments	Impact of negotiation
CIT1					
1.	NoE	**	**	Identical GAP in T.A.	=
2.	IP	**	**	Improved GAP in T.A.	↑
3.	NoE	*	*	Improved GAP in T.A.	↑
4.	IP	*	*		=
5.	NoE	Non-GAP	*	The proposal contained a short section 'gender issues', but no GAP	↑
CIT3					
6.	IP	**	**	Shorter in T.A.	=
7.	IP	***	***		=
8.	IP	**	*	Loss of elements in T.A.	↓
9.	NoE	**	**		=
10.	NoE	missing	**		↑
11.	NoE	**	**		=
12.	NoE	**	**		=

⁸¹ The proposals of the other five approved projects could not be made available by the EC.

Table 6.1: Continued

Project	Instr.	GAP in proposal	GAP in techn. annex (T.A.)	Comments	Impact of negotiation
13.	NoE	missing	*		↑
14.	NoE	*	**		↑
15.	IP	**	**		=
16.	IP	*	*	Loss of elements in T.A.	↓
17.	NoE	*	*	Improved GAP in T.A.	↑
18.	IP	*	*	Decreased quality in T.A.	↓
19.	NoE	*	***		↑
20.	NoE	*	*		=
CIT4					
21.	IP	*	**	Clearly improved in terms of gender issues related to subject of research	↑
22.	IP	***	***		=
23.	IP	prop. not available	**		
24.	IP	prop. not available	***		
25.	IP	**	**		=
26.	IP	prop. not available	**		
27.	IP	**	**		=
28.	NoE	prop. not available	**		
29.	IP	***	***		=
30.	IP	*	*		=
31.	IP	**	**		=
32.	IP	prop. not available	**		
33.	NoE	**	*	Decreased quality in T.A.	↓
34.	IP	**	*	Loss of elements in T.A.	↓

Quality of GAPs in proposals

As can be seen in the table above, the quality of the GAPs as they were included in the proposals has been quite low for the first call (CIT-1 and CIT-3): out of the 20 proposals that were selected for funding, eight GAPs were assessed as 'poor', one as a 'non-GAP', two proposals did not contain a GAP at all. Only one proposal contained a GAP that was assessed as 'excellent'. A weak quality of GAP was in nearly all cases recognised in a lack of specific issues being

identified in the research subject of relevance to gender or by a lack of specific measures and/or activities to address gender (merely expressing some 'intentions') either in terms of female participation and/or in the research work.

For the proposals resulting from the second call, an improvement in the quality of the GAPs has been noticeable: from the nine proposals analysed, only two were assessed as 'poor'. This improvement can probably be attributed to a learning curve within the research community on how to set up GAPs, but not to the aid offered by the Women and Science Unit in the form of the publication *Gender Action Plans – A compendium of good practices*, as the latter was published only in December 2005 while the deadline for the CIT-4 call was 13 April 2005.

In general, it appeared from the GAP analysis that the issue of female participation and equal opportunities was addressed more than the gender relevance within the content of the research. This finding is in line with the results from the analysis of the integration of gender in the projects (as reported in Chapter 5.). This indicates that the goal of increasing female participation seemed easier to address and suggests a lack of understanding and capacity within research teams to address the gender issues related to their subject matter: a lack of gender expertise.

Quality of the GAPs in the technical annexes: impact of the negotiation

As regards the impact of the negotiation, the 'average assessment' of the 29 projects of which both proposal and technical annex were analysed can be taken as an indicator. For these projects, the average assessment was 1.6 stars for proposals and 1.7 for contracts. This is a (very) moderate improvement. It must however be pointed out that, notably for the first call, there have sometimes been improvements in a GAP without a change in score, which is why a column has been included in the above table on the impact of the negotiation.

In general, less impact was noticed of the negotiation on the quality of the GAPs for projects approved under the second call for Priority 7, with for CIT-4 more GAPs being identical in the proposal and in the technical annex to the contract. This seems to suggest that in these cases, the GAPs were not discussed during the negotiation phase.

A possible explanation can be the fact that the 'original' quality of the GAPs as included in the proposal was, on average, better than under the first call. However, this does not mean that there was no scope for further improvements.

The analysis shows that in one third of the cases (nine of the 29 assessed) the quality of the GAP improved from the proposal to the contract stage. One can assume that these improvements are the result of the contract negotiations. This is a positive finding, although the results show that a more significant impact could have been realised. These improvements took mainly place for projects that resulted from the first call, where eight of the 20 projects' GAPs assessed were of higher quality in the technical annex than in the proposal, while only one out of the

nine projects approved under CIT-4 (and for which both proposal and technical annex were reviewed) had an improved GAP in the technical annex. As mentioned above, this could be explained by the fact that the GAPs in the proposals under the second call were in general of higher quality.

A negative finding of the analysis has been that for five projects (of the 29), the quality of the GAP as included in the technical annex of the contract was lower than it had been in the proposal. These are situations one would not expect to find given the purpose of contract negotiations to ensure selected projects are 'fit for funding.' Especially for those projects where the original GAP quality was 'poor,' bringing these GAPs to a higher level by suggesting improvements would have been quite easy. Loss of quality in the GAP was in all five cases caused by the fact that elements were dropped in the final version of the GAP.

Based on the analysis performed, five of the projects approved for financing contain an 'excellent' GAP in the technical annex to the contract (two from the first call, and three from the second call).

Conclusions from the comparative assessment

Summarising the main points that the analysis has brought to light, we found that two out of 20 proposals contracted under the first call were sent in without a GAP, and got approved for funding despite the fact that this mandatory part of the proposal had not been provided.

An improvement in the (original) quality of the GAPs has been noticeable for the approved proposals resulting from the second call in comparison to those from the first call. While only half of the GAPs in approved proposals from the first call were of satisfactory quality and covered most or all of the required elements adequately, this share rose to seven out of nine for the assessed GAPs from the second call.

The gender relevance of the research content seems more difficult to grasp than the issues of female participation and equal opportunities, which indicates a capacity gap within research teams to adequately make their research gender sensitive. Still, as the analysis of women's participation in project teams has shown (cfr. Chapter 4), the GAPs have not had an impact on women's participation rate in projects either – despite the fact that GAPs tended to be more precise with respect to these issues.

There is an impact of the negotiation on the quality of the GAPs: in one third of the cases the quality of the GAP improved from the proposal to the contract stage. However, more improvements and greater impact would have been possible – especially in the second half of the FP6 cycle, impacts of negotiations went down. Furthermore, also negative impact of negotiations was noted.

6.3. GAP quality as indicator of gender integration in the project

The results of the GAP analysis for each project have been compared to the results of the assessment of the treatment of gender in these projects, as discussed in the previous chapter. The aim of this comparison has been to verify the consistency of these results. At the same

time, it allows to check the usefulness of a GAP review to assess the overall quality of the project in terms of integration of the gender dimension.

Table 6.2 presents the results of both analyses.

Table 6.2: Correlation between quality of GAPs and quality of gender integration in the project – Priority 7 (N=34)

Project categorisation		One-star GAP	Two-star GAP	Three-star GAP
Gender blind		-	-	-
Gender is not mentioned, but only of indirect relevance		-	-	-
Gender is relevant and mentioned, but not addressed		5	1	-
Gender integrated	High (embedded)	2	2	5
	Medium	3	6	-
	Low	2	6	-
Gender specific		-	2	-
Total sample		12	17	5

Quite logically, as the inclusion of a GAP ('gender action plan') in the project proposals for Integrated Projects and Networks of Excellence was mandatory, these proposals do mention 'gender'. This is the explanation for the fact that the first categories ('gender blind' and 'gender is not mentioned, but only of indirect relevance') are empty.

The following observations can be made on the basis of the above table:

- All proposals with 'three star' GAPs were found to be integrating gender fully, and gender can hence be considered as 'embedded' in these projects' designs.
- The full review of the proposal proves in more than half of the cases that have a 'one star' GAP (7 out of 12) that these projects either poorly address gender, or not at all. This indicates that what is presented in these GAPs is just lip service.
- Projects that integrate gender to a high extent or that are gender specific do not necessarily reflect this quality in the GAP. Indeed, the analysis seems to indicate that the GAP might be considered as 'superfluous' by these project teams, or as a mere demand for repetition of elements that are elsewhere in the proposal elaborated and detailed.

In summary, the findings of the comparative analysis suggest that one cannot a priori conclude on the basis of a low quality GAP that gender is not properly addressed in the project. On the other hand, excellent GAPs do seem to indicate the high level of integration of gender in the project.

However, given the relatively small number of projects with GAPs in the domain of SSH (34), while in total 703 IPs and 171 NoEs were funded under FP6 (European Commission, 2008b), an analysis based on larger samples would be required to confirm this.

6.4. Implementation of GAPs

In order to check the implementation of the GAPs, the completed GAP Interim Implementation Reports (or briefly 'GAP questionnaires') that were submitted by the project teams were reviewed. This is a mandatory electronic reporting for project holders of IPs and NoEs, due at the end of the first reporting period.

This reporting tool was conceived to be completed by the project coordinator for the whole of the project (in parts 1, 2, 5 and 6) and by each contractor for certain issues (parts 1, 3, and 4)⁸². Instructions on how to complete the questionnaire should have been communicated to the project holders by the Commission Project Officer.

The GAP questionnaires were available in SESAM (the online reporting system installed by the European Commission for FP6 project reporting) for thirteen of the 20 projects from CIT1 and CIT3 in the sample by May 2007. No GAP questionnaires were available yet for CIT4 projects as the contracts for these projects were only signed in the second half of 2006, early 2007.

In general, drawing conclusions as to the quality of the GAP implementation by the project holders on the basis of these GAP questionnaires has been difficult for a number of reasons. There has apparently been confusion among the project holders on how and by whom these GAP questionnaires needed to be filled in.

For six of the thirteen projects, only one questionnaire was submitted for the whole project and consortium. However, only one of these was complete. The five others missed the part on gender statistics in the work force and 'gender actions' in the project that needed to be completed by each contractor. For the other eight projects, the questionnaire part relating to the gender balance in the workforce (statistics) and 'gender actions' in the project was completed for all consortium partners individually (for one project, up to 42 separate sheets were submitted).

Also, the feedback and data provided in these (sometimes partial) questionnaires appeared to be fragmented and of highly variable quality. This observation raises questions as to the usability of SESAM, electronic reporting system used by the European Commission, as well as on the use made of these reports by the European Commission. Indeed, this finding might lead one to wonder whether in the Commission the completeness and quality of this reporting by project holders was monitored by anybody at all – although this is the responsibility of the respective project officers.

Nevertheless, the review of these thirteen GAP questionnaires revealed that only four of these projects indicated to have a budget allocated to their GAP (ranging from 20.000 euro to 170.855

⁸² As specified in the document 'Project reporting in FP6. Guidance notes for Integrated Projects, Networks of Excellence, Specific Targeted Research or Innovation Projects, Coordination Actions, Specific Support Actions, Co-operative Research Projects and Collective Research Projects.'

euro). In the absence of financial resources for the realisation of a GAP, its effectiveness can be questioned. However, in the GAP structure, the EC had not foreseen a section in which a dedicated budget was to be indicated. What was requested was only a 'plan', a text. The analysis also learns however that there are a few projects that demonstrate a positive situation or evolution in terms of gender integration in their project, as illustrated by the examples below.

One NoE of CIT3, which was considered as poorly integrating gender in the project based on its technical annex, while its GAP was rated as 'two star', has been the only one to have submitted a complete GAP report for the whole project and consortium. This GAP report was found to be of acceptable quality. It indicated that a budget of 85000 euro was allocated to the GAP within the project.

An IP from CIT1 which mentioned but did not address gender in its technical annex, and of which the GAP was rated as only a 'one star' GAP, submitted a GAP report of adequate quality, in which the project team gives a fair view of the status as regards gender. They recognise that *'the gender dimension of the research could be enhanced'*, a fact that is duly taken on board by the project leaders. At the same time, they demonstrate to have undertaken various actions in terms of equal opportunities.

The above examples show that the GAPs have brought about some positive results and thus have had an added value, albeit that this could have been bigger. But even while results could have been more substantial, the GAPs have at least had an awareness-raising effect within the consortia running Integrated Projects and Networks of Excellence.

In summary, the review revealed that the GAP reporting system and design were inadequate for providing an easy or transparent view on the reality of the projects. Moreover, the questionable quantity and quality of reports available in the system casts doubts over the user-friendliness and functionalities of the reporting system itself – again an indication of a persistent problem of deficient electronic information systems.

It can therefore be concluded that, while it is absolutely legitimate for the EC as funding authority to require reporting from the project holders, the reporting tools that were put in place did not allow an effective exploitation of the data provided. Furthermore, there are signs that the Commission has not at all monitored, let alone effectively used, the reporting results. Still, from the scarce data that could be retrieved through the GAP reporting, it appeared that even though the GAPs have not been fully effective, in that they do not seem to have helped all projects to integrate gender adequately, they have had an added value, not in the least in terms of awareness-raising.

6.5. Opinions about the GAP from the field

In the present section, we turn to what the project holders themselves found about the GAP and its usefulness in order to complement the above findings, based on documentary reviews.

On April 2nd 2008, when FP7 was already running, a 'GAP workshop' was organised by the European Commission to which persons responsible for the implementation of the GAP in their respective project were invited to discuss their opinions and experiences with the GAP.⁸³ The projects represented at this workshop, selected by the Commission from among those mentioned in the gender monitoring studies, came from a variety of research areas and were said to reflect a fair mix of projects with good, mediocre and low quality GAPs.

The European Commission's responsible head of unit⁸⁴ opened the workshop by explaining its purposes and inviting the persons present to freely express their views, positive or negative, about the GAP as one of the tools in FP6 to mainstream gender in the research projects.

The brief history of the GAP was described, explaining it had been a new tool to mainstream gender in the largest FP6 projects: 'Networks of Excellence' and 'Integrated Projects'. While the GAP was mandatory for these instruments in FP6, there is no such requirement anymore in FP7: applicants are left the choice to address gender already in their proposal, or to take it up only at the negotiation stage, once their project passed the evaluation. The reason given by the Commission for this decision has been the objective to 'simplify' administrative requirements for FP7. Reference was made to complaint letters from certain powerful research bodies, received by the Commission during the preparation process of FP7. In these letters, these bodies would have criticised the mandatory consideration of so-called cross-cutting issues in applying for EU research funding and the tools that accompany them – for example the Gender Action Plans – with the arguments that these are burdensome, overly bureaucratic and hindrances for the quality of their research work and thus impeding 'excellent' research.⁸⁵

It was mentioned however at that GAP workshop that GAPs, possibly in a revised form, might be reintroduced as mandatory in FP7, in the context of the mid-term review of FP7. In the light of this option, it was very useful to collect the opinions from those with first hand experience with the tool.

The participants in this GAP workshop raised a number of issues that are of particular relevance to the assessment of the GAP and its effectiveness in the gender mainstreaming approach under the EU framework programmes.⁸⁶

Participants found that there have been insufficient guidance and instructions available

⁸³ I attended the workshop representing the QUING project, an Integrated Project funded under Priority7 (SSH) of FP6.

⁸⁴ At the time of the workshop, the responsibility for gender was located in the unit 'Scientific Culture and Gender Issues', before the 'Women and Science' unit.

⁸⁵ The same two arguments of the scientific community seeing the GAP as an unnecessary bureaucratic burden and the EC wanting to simplify the FP procedures have been repeated in the Commission's publication 'Stocktaking 10 years of "Women in Science" policy by the European Commission 1999-2009 (European Commission 2010).

⁸⁶ The points mentioned are based on the author's own notes from the meeting.

to research teams on what the GAP should contain and how to deal with its set-up and implementation. This resulted in many project teams not knowing how to start working with the GAP, and all having to 'invent the wheel'. Project coordinators often appointed one of the female team members as GAP responsible assuming that 'a woman should be able to do it', which suggests a (not uncommon) belief that all women have gender knowledge and expertise. Those projects where the GAP eventually did come to being and in which positive experiences were noted, started the implementation very pragmatically: bringing together a working group or the main project team members to brainstorm together on what could be done within the GAP-context of their project. This approach led to 'aha' experiences and in several cases allowed relevant gender aspects of the work to be identified and addressed.

It appeared from the discussion that in many projects the focus has been on facilitating and encouraging participation of women in the project activities, often by installing specific arrangements (mostly 'equal opportunities measures') like childcare facilities during project meetings. While this is positive and corresponding to real needs and concerns (as also reflected in the results from the ERA consultation, described in Chapter 4) it is however not enough if gender issues in the research contents remain overlooked and unaddressed.

Overall, the opinions of those that have been responsible for the GAP within their project were more positive than negative about the tool. The majority of those present at the workshop did recognise the added value that had been brought by the GAP into their project and said to be in favour of keeping the GAP as a mandatory element in EU funded research. Nevertheless, probably all present at the workshop agreed that there were important flaws in the tool, its introduction and the communication about it – and thus that the GAP as a tool could be improved significantly. One criticism that was expressed is that the GAP was a separate section, to be included as one of the very last parts in the project proposal. It seemed conceived as an add-on to a project, rather than an integral part of it. This point is also made by Haafkens and Klinge (2006) with their GenderBasic work (see the next section). Another observation made was that the project teams did not feel that the European Commission attached much importance to the GAPs. This was interpreted from the communications with the responsible project officers who were said not to pay as much attention to the GAP and gender issues as to other elements of the project. This is in line with the above finding about the GAP Implementation Reports not being available in the EC system.

The workshop also revealed that it is unlikely that many applicants will voluntarily and explicitly include a section on gender in their proposal if such section is not mandatory. This appeared from a discussion and quick 'voting' that was done among the participants. The major obstacle against voluntarily including a section that is not required is that it would be evaluated together with the rest of the proposal, thus enhancing the 'risk' for applicants to receive negative judgements, while there is no incentive provided for including such section.

From the above points, raised by persons who have been involved with the actual implementation of GAPs, it can be concluded that the research community lacked the resources, and notably the capacity, to effectively take up this new gender mainstreaming instrument. The fact that no awareness-raising or capacity building initiatives had been foreseen by the EC to accompany the launch of this new tool hampered its effectiveness. This observation confirms the finding (set out notably in Chapters 3 and 5 above) that there have been flaws in the planning of the gender mainstreaming implementation in FP6: the research community was not adequately equipped and missed resources to effectively take up the responsibility attributed to it. The perception that the European Commission not really attached much importance to the GAPs in comparison to other elements of the project further undermined its potential. This analysis confirms that the absence of hard incentives negatively impacts on the effectiveness of the approach.

It is worth noting that the discussions revealed that where actions took place in the context of a GAP, these were often geared towards encouraging and increasing women's participation, whereas the gender dimension of the research content was hardly addressed. This confirms that the former is clearly a more 'accessible' concept than the latter, which requires insights into how gender relates to the research work that is undertaken, as well as (at least some basic) views on how the work can take gender issues into account. This finding again confirms a shrinking of the approach in the practice towards a focus on women's participation at the expense of gender in the research content, causing unevenness in the outcomes.

Still, despite the mentioned shortcomings, those who applied the GAP in their projects agreed that its added value outweighed the negative aspects of the tool.

6.6. Findings from the GenderBasic project in relation to the GAP

In addition to the author's own research into the use of the GAP as new instrument under FP6, also others have collected useful data. One such relevant source is the GenderBasic project. In the present section, the findings of this project in relation to the GAP are presented. This review will allow validating and complementing the above findings.

Following the Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) study of the 'Quality of Life and Management of Living Resources' programme under FP5 (Klinge & Bosch, 2001), the European Commission introduced new guidelines for applicants submitting proposals in the thematic priorities 1.1.1 'Life sciences, genomics and biotechnology for health' and 1.1.5 'Food Quality and Safety' of FP6. Applicants had to answer a set of specific questions regarding the integration of the gender dimension in their projects. The academics-consultants who performed the FP5 GIA study in these areas engaged in a project called GenderBasic, answering to the FP6 call concerning the development of tools for the integration of the gender dimension in life sciences research. The GenderBasic project ran from October 2005 to January 2008.

One of the activities of the project consisted in an exploration of how participants of projects financed under the first and second calls of thematic priority 'Food Quality and Safety' of FP6

experience the process of integrating the gender dimension in their research activities (Work Package 2 of the GenderBasic project). In this WP2, the researchers looked at the GAPs of thirteen projects, all Integrated Projects or Networks of Excellence, and semi-structured interviews were conducted with researchers from these thirteen projects. Twelve of the respondents were gender contact persons for their project and one was a project director. Haafkens and Klinge (Haafkens & Klinge, 2006) observe in their report that with few exceptions, the GAPs of these thirteen projects were not very explicit on how the project would pay attention to the gender dimension in research work packages, the GAP being written as an 'attachment' to the main project proposal. They distinguish three ways in which gender was considered in the projects and relate this to the project researchers' attitudes to gender:

- in projects where there was no attention to the gender dimension in the main research activities, the project researchers argued that a gender sensitive approach had no relevance for their subject matter (whether justified or not);
- the informants of projects that demonstrated an occasional consideration of sex/gender issues in the main research activities argued that such an approach is in accordance with the common research practices in this field and considered no further specific consideration as needed;
- a last group of projects considered attention to sex- and gender-related factors as a cross-cutting issue with potential relevance for all researchers. In this group, the consideration of the gender dimension in research was regarded as requiring an adaptation of the existing ways of doing research.

In all thirteen projects, a gender contact person had been appointed who was in charge of the coordination and implementation of the GAP. Haafkens and Klinge suggest that this is likely to be an effect of the EU gender equality policy requirements. They point out that while most of these gender contact persons saw it as one of their main tasks to mobilise attention to a gender sensitive research approach among the researchers in their project, many were at loss on how this could be done. This finding indicates a capacity problem. Based on their interviews, Haafkens and Klinge identify four essential conditions that facilitate this task for the gender contact persons:

- a budget must be associated to the GAP to implement it;
- the gender contact person should have a central position in the project organisation;
- the gender contact person should be competent in gender studies;
- the gender contact person should be competent in communicating about gender issues with scientists.

These conditions were found combined only in a few of the thirteen projects analysed in GenderBasic, particularly those that had adopted a crosscutting or horizontal approach to gender.

Corroborating my own conclusions, as set out in the sections above, Haafkens and Klinge

have confirmed with their work that there have been undeniable positive effects brought by the GAPs to research projects funded under FP6 – even when these effects could have been much stronger. Such effects could not have taken place if GAPs had not been imposed as a mandatory element in IPs and NoEs. However, one of the shortcomings that Haafkens and Klinge recognise in the GAP design as it was conceived under FP6 is its status as an ‘attachment’ to the main body of the proposal and thus to the main body of research work. Gender issues were to be laid out in the GAP, but were in most projects disconnected from the ‘real work’ performed under the various work packages.

6.7. What other sources say about the Gender Action Plan

In the present section, I will draw upon some more reports and elements of information about the GAP and its perceived usefulness, effectiveness and added value, to further enrich the insights.

A relevant source about the effectiveness of the GAPs under FP6, as well as about the contribution made by FP6 to the realisation of the gender equality goal, is the report drafted by the external evaluation panel that performed an ex-post evaluation of FP6 for the European Commission.

In 2008, an external evaluation panel was appointed to perform an ex-post evaluation of the Sixth Framework Programmes for Research and Technological Development. Their final report (Rietschel et al., 2009), published in February 2009, makes clear that the panel was critical about the disappointing results in terms of progress towards gender equality made under FP6 and the rather ‘loose’ approach taken by the Commission towards gender equality in the FP. Especially noteworthy is its explicit disapproval of the Commission’s decision to abolish the Gender Action Plans in FP7: *“The abolition of Gender Action Plans in FP7 is an example of unfortunate simplification. The Commission should make female participation a ‘tie-breaker’ criterion when considering proposals of equal merit in future. Gender equality should be strictly enforced in EU expert and advisory groups, panels and committees”* (page 26).

And on page 55, it is written that *“While the Science and Society part of FP6 ran several activities such as networks, consultations and publicity actions concerning gender, none appears directly to have touched either national policy in the area or the way the FPs are run. The attempt to introduce gender action plans into the IPs and NoEs was only partly successful and many did not have such plans. Women’s participation in the FP is now being counted (in FP7) but is not in any sense being managed. The disappointing progress on female researcher’s participation in the FP needs to be highlighted and remedied. The Expert Group further stresses the need for a stronger focus on gender action plans and for valid and high quality statistics on participation in FP7 by female researchers.”*

It is quite striking though that the panel restricted its assessment to women’s participation in the framework programme, and to the efforts undertaken by the EC to increase such participation. The gender dimension of funded research was not addressed at all by the experts, despite the

fact that it emphasises in its report the importance of assessing the wider societal impacts of the framework programme. This 'reduced' consideration of gender issues by the experts corresponds to a 'shrinking' of the gender equality goal in the practice of these evaluators.

Another report that addresses the usefulness, effectiveness and added value of the GAPs is the final synthesis report presenting the overall results of the various monitoring studies that took place under FP6 (European Commission, 2009). This report confirms my own findings regarding the GAPs. It notably states (on its pages 21 to 23) that overall, the studies indicated that GAPs were a useful tool for raising awareness about the importance of gender equality in science, but that the quality of the submitted GAPs was quite variable and that most of the planned actions related to increasing the participation of women while the gender aspect of the research content was rarely included. Projects rarely assigned budgets to GAPs and without financial commitments, the likelihood of implementing planned actions was reduced.

Only a minority of projects provided GAP progress reports, and in general, monitoring of the implementation of GAPs was found to be weak. The fact that GAPs were not scored during the evaluation reduced incentives on the part of the projects to create robust and meaningful gender action plans and on the part of evaluators to take the assessment of the GAPs seriously. Although the Gender Action Plan Reporting Questionnaire was developed to assist the process of monitoring and reporting on the GAPs, the software to implement the questionnaires did not work at the beginning of FP6 and there was little follow up by project officers to collect hard copies of the reports. The availability of properly functioning software would certainly have made the monitoring and reporting easier.

In spite of the weaknesses identified in many GAPs, there was a consensus among the gender monitoring studies that they should be retained in future Framework Programmes, albeit in a revised format. GAPs could have been a very effective tool if they had been more rigorously evaluated and implemented – and made more user-friendly to both project holders and evaluators.

The issues identified above were recognised by Commissioner for Science and Research Janez Potcnik in his speech on 14 May 2009 at the Prague Conference where ten years of 'women and science' activities by the EC were celebrated. The Commissioner stated there that: "*Gender Action Plans were introduced in the Sixth Framework Programme, to monitor the existence of gender aspects in all EU funded research, from social science to nanotechnologies. I must admit that their implementation was not the smoothest: there were technical problems, low gender awareness among the scientific community and among Commission officials made it extremely difficult.*" (Potcnik, 2009)

To this, he added: "*In FP7 we have then put in place a different approach: instead of requesting Gender Action Plans at project level, we have put more emphasis on gender aspects when drafting the work programmes; we have organised gender training activities and established an FP7 group who will analyse the annual work programmes from a gendered perspective.*"

The above shows how the EC legitimised the shrunk approach taken to gender in FP7: from a more comprehensive approach in which the expected contribution from the various actors was considered under FP6, to an ad hoc approach in which the responsibilities from the actors appear to be lifted. Considering what was mentioned as put in place for FP7, one might question whether this approach can still be labelled gender mainstreaming.

In summary, this section, using other reports and information, confirms what was found earlier: that the GAP as an instrument has been less effective than it could have been. This is due to shortcomings in the design of the instrument itself, as well as in the planning of the broader gender mainstreaming approach at the framework programme level, as no accompanying measures had been foreseen for the launch of the instrument to ensure its effective uptake. Also the absence of accountability structures has negatively impacted upon the effectiveness of the instrument: the GAPs were not scored during the proposal evaluation, project holders realised their project officers were not strict as regards their GAP implementation, and project officers themselves did not seem to have been held accountable for weak GAPs in their projects either – which confirms the impression that was created that the European Commission did not attach much importance to gender equality in research after all.

This section has also drawn the attention to the lack of financial resources at the project level to effectively implement the GAPs. This finding confirms that gender was not addressed as a staged process in the projects, as was also concluded in the previous chapter (which reviewed the integration of gender in the projects).

Lastly, it can be concluded that a shrinking of the approach towards women's participation has taken place both at the framework programme level and at the project level. It is remarkable that the shrinking which at first was identified in the actual practice of the projects, in FP7 seemed to have been structurally 'fixed', as the explanation given by the Commissioner for the removal of the GAPs and how the alternative actions were installed suggests that project holders are in FP7 no longer expected to integrate gender in their research content. Indeed, the responsibility for the realisation of this part of the gender equality goal appears removed from the researchers. Instead, it is suggested that the EC would render the work programmes gender-sensitive – which will prove not to be done in practice (as shown in Chapter 7). One possible element that might have influenced the structural shrinking of the gender equality goal at the policy level is the discursive 'bending' of the gender equality policy goal in the research domain towards the Barcelona target (set by the European Council in March 2002) of investing 3% of EU GDP in R&D, a goal which was presented as requiring the mobilisation of all researchers' full potential and the optimisation of researchers' careers with the aim of keeping them in the profession.

6.8. Conclusions regarding the Gender Action Plan

The case of the GAP as a new instrument to support the integration of gender issues in research projects is an interesting one. The GAP has been a promising instrument and was designed

sensibly: its concept departed from a situational analysis, from where a plan of actions was to be set up to address the issues identified – both in terms of women's participation and in terms of the gender dimension regarding the work to be undertaken. The research has shown that the GAP has brought some results, mainly in terms of awareness-raising for gender issues in the research community, hereby proving an undeniable added value. Still, it has not been fully effective, as its impacts in terms of pushing forward gender equality in research have remained disappointingly low.

The analyses revealed variability and unevenness in various ways. First of all, the quality of the GAPs submitted in proposals varied from very weak to excellent, while some did not even contain a GAP despite the fact that this was a mandatory part of the proposal. The average quality of the GAPs has been lower in the proposals submitted under the first SSH call than of those submitted under the second call. This positive evolution is however not attributable to extra support provided by the Commission to the research community, but is more likely the result of a learning curve. How gender was addressed in the GAPs varied from comprehensively (adequately addressing women's participation and equal opportunities as well as the gender dimension of the research content) to a 'shrunk' focus on women's participation only. The effects of the negotiations on the quality of the GAPs have been uneven: while a clear positive impact could be noted from the negotiations following the first call, this effect was significantly lower in the second call. Variability has furthermore been noticed in the GAP reporting: in its availability in the electronic system as well as in its quality, indicating a certain ineffectiveness of the gender mainstreaming measures.

Let us now take a look at the mechanisms that have been at play and that can explain these observations. First of all, when considering whether conceptual misunderstandings might have occurred, we can confirm that there has undeniably been confusion among researchers on what the GAP was intended for and how it was to be dealt with. The predominant interpretation of the GAP's objective in FP6 has been to increase women's participation in research. This partial interpretation or understanding can probably be attributed to the fact that increasing participation rates seemed more straightforward than 'integrating the gender dimension in the research content' – a concept that remained fuzzy for many. I argue that this general lack of awareness of what 'integrating gender in research' actually comprises reflects a lack of capacity, and is the main explanation for the uneven and overall disappointingly low results.

The fact that the FP6 ex-post external evaluation panel restricted its assessment to women's participation in FP6 and ignored to what extent FP6 contributed to rendering the contents of EU-funded research gender sensitive is more concerning and is less likely attributable to a lack of understanding of the objective. Rather, the experts do not seem to have been appropriately briefed on FP6's gender mainstreaming objectives to properly perform their assessment and neither were they informed about the gender monitoring studies – otherwise these studies should have served as source for their work and would have been referred to in their report

(which they were not). This finding suggests this might have been a deliberate act on the part of the European Commission to shrink the gender equality approach to a focus on women's participation only, possibly to hide away the lack of results in terms of progress towards making EU-funded research gender sensitive.

While it can rightly be argued that an important shortcoming of the GAP was that it was conceived as an 'add-on' to the regular research work, rather than fully embedding the gender issues in it, I suggest that the main flaws in the design of the gender policy implementation plan in FP6 are situated elsewhere. The following problems can notably be identified: the GAP, a new tool, has been introduced as mandatory for the new funding instruments (the biggest projects) without any provision to support this introduction – no explanations were offered or awareness-raising actions were run by the EC on what exactly was expected with the GAPs and why. It may thus not come as a surprise that the gender monitoring studies found that the research community, as well as the other actors (proposal evaluators and Commission officers) lacked the capacity to adequately deal with the tool. The problem was exacerbated by the fact that the new tool was imposed as a top-down measure from the policy level to be implemented in the 'real world'. It is obvious that in such situation of 'bridging' from the policy context to the research community at large, the number of actors who are expected to take up gender related responsibilities is a multiple from the number of actors at the policy level (the framework programme level in this case, as opposed to the project level). Logically, the communication challenges that gender mainstreaming entails to raise awareness, to convince, to advocate or to build capacity were multiplied. Still, this huge communication challenge was ignored and remained unaddressed. Rather, the lack of resources and of properly functioning monitoring and follow-up mechanisms and systems in the Commission communicated implicitly to the research community that the gender requirements in FP6 were not so stringent at all, the rhetorical commitment to gender equality in research on the part of the EC proving stronger than the actual commitment. This undermined the approach towards gender equality in FP6 and significantly jeopardised its outcomes, and thus its effectiveness.

Still, as the research has shown, it is likely that a 'natural' learning effect has been at play as the quality of the GAPs submitted with project proposals increased in the course of FP6, an effect that cannot be explained by support mechanisms provided to the research community by the EC. This positive finding is another indication that the GAP as an instrument has had an added value and that rhetorical commitments can have 'real' outcomes too, probably because they are sometimes supported and can be used as leverage by other actors.

The case study of the GAPs confirms largely the validity of the key prerequisites proposed in Chapter 2. Notably the need for sufficient, dedicated resources for the realisation of the gender policy implementation can be emphasised. While the concept of the GAP itself took a staged approach to the integration of gender issues in research projects (as it departed from an analysis to formulate planned actions, although without asking for dedicated resources),

the introduction of the GAP in the Framework Programme was not at all 'staged'. The steps of communication, awareness-raising and capacity-building were all skipped.

The case also confirms the need for accountability structures and provisions. The fact that the quality of the GAP was not scored in the proposal evaluation process did not provide for an incentive for researchers to adequately deal with gender issues, and the inexistent follow-up of the GAP reporting requirements contributed to results not being produced. Last but not least, researchers themselves confirmed (at the occasion of the GAP workshop) that if a GAP was optional instead of mandatory in a proposal, they would not include it in the absence of incentives to do so.

As mentioned before, the GAP has been perceived as an add-on to projects, distracting and disconnected from the 'real work' rather than helping to fully integrate gender in all stages of the project cycle. This is an important flaw, which suggests the need for gender tools to include formal linkages to the 'mainstream' work, so that gender can be systematically integrated in regular work and activities. While there is growing awareness about the cross-cutting nature of gender (Hafner-Burton & Pollack, 2008; Levy, 1992), and that it should not be dealt with in isolation (Haafkens & Klinge, 2006; Khundker, 2004; Wieringa, 1994), this point has so far not explicitly been raised as a requirement in relation to gender mainstreaming *tools*.

The analysis suggests that the inadequate performance on the part of the actors does not necessarily have to be explained by resistance to gender equality or gender mainstreaming per se. Reservations and reluctance because of incapacity may just as well explain non-action on the part of the research community and expert evaluators. One explanation for the ineffectiveness of the GAPs is that no or hardly any budgets had generally been foreseen for their implementation. Lack of resources (notably properly functioning electronic information systems) and knowledge may furthermore explain project officers' lax approach towards project holders. Last but not least, the lack of incentives to adequately deal with gender issues can explain why gender was not considered more carefully across the board.

At the same time, however, it was noted that in the projects which had a GAP, a specific person was usually appointed as responsible for the GAP implementation. Within the limits of their project and their own capacity, these persons have undertaken efforts for integrating gender in the research which at least should be recognised for their awareness-raising effect.

Still, the GAP analysis does also reveal some signs of resistance. The fact that the EC project officers paid less attention to the GAP implementation and to gender issues in general than to other elements of the projects is a sign of resistance within the EC to take up this responsibility. While GAPs tended to focus on women's participation, they have not helped to raise women's participation in FP6, as women's participation rate was not higher than in FP5. This means that the rhetorical commitments expressed in the GAPs did not translate into actions that brought real progress for women. This can undoubtedly, at least in part, be explained by the perceived lack of importance attached to gender issues on the part of the EC project officers.

The in-depth analysis undertaken on the GAPs also suggest that organisation-specific features have affected the gender mainstreaming implementation and its results. Problems that jeopardised the gender mainstreaming work in FP6 were lack of knowledge on gender issues within the European Commission, lack of thematic training for those that were to take up specific tasks (notably scientific officers and proposal evaluators) and poorly developed information systems. These are the same problems as Braithwaite identified with her analysis of gender mainstreaming in the European Structural Funds (Braithwaite, 2000). Again, in the case of the EC research policy, the technical, human and financial resources allocated to support gender mainstreaming have been insufficient. While gender mainstreaming as a strategy has formally been adopted by the EC, the commitment therefore remains mainly rhetorical. The case shows that the lessons learnt from gender mainstreaming in the European Structural Funds have not been taken up. This suggests an unwillingness on the part of the Commission to question and address those institutional features that negatively affect its gender mainstreaming undertakings, which in turn can be seen as an indicator of resistance.

7. The case in context: the DG Research before, during and after FP6

This chapter takes a closer look at what happened within the DG Research before and during the FP6 implementation and in the initial stages of FP7 in terms of staff commitments and availabilities, structural changes and shifts in political priorities. Doing so will allow to further answer the research questions, notably by verifying the fulfilment of conditions - as regards the deep organisational culture and structures, accountability and resources. Also the research question related to resistance, whether and how it manifests itself and what are really the roots of it, will be addressed. Finally, this chapter is the most important one for clarifying how the organisational features of the European Commission have influenced the implementation of gender mainstreaming under FP6, and through which mechanisms this happened.

The next section of this chapter gives more information on method and data. Following this is a section that is a narrative part about the period that preceded FP6. It is structured as much as possible following the chronological order of events. The section that follows (section three) is an account of the staff mobility in the DG RTD at the time of the gender monitoring studies and of how this impacted upon the gender monitoring work to be done. Section four reports on the observations by the author of resistance, by the EC or individual officers, to gender equality actions, and describes different forms of resistance that occurred. Section five describes the transition process between FP6 and FP7, upon completion of the gender monitoring studies and at the end of FP6. Section six provides a picture of how the situation is under FP7, and the last section of this chapter formulates the conclusions that can be derived from the institutional insights and relates these to the research questions addressed by this chapter (as put here above).

7.1. Method and data

What is reported upon in this chapter is for the largest part based on participatory observation – insights collected from working on various studies and projects for the DG Research – and on personal notes. Other sources have been interviews, informal contacts and exchanges with civil servants in the DG RTD and with other experts working for them. Also published and unpublished documents have provided input for this chapter. Together, these sources allow to gain a much more precise understanding of why things happened the way they did, than would have been possible by a mere documentary analysis. Indeed, I argue that it is exactly by including the consideration of the institutional setting and working in practice that forms the backdrop against which gender mainstreaming implementation takes place (or, in other words, by ‘looking behind the scenes’) that the best understanding can be built of what has worked and what not, and which are the explanatory factors. Yet, this section is based on interpretation to a larger extent than the previous chapters. Therefore it gives more precise information about the data used and what is concluded on the basis of this data in the analytical sections.

In what follows, I have anonymized those civil servants that have played a role in the gender mainstreaming implementation who did not hold functions in the highest hierarchical positions. Those officials situated at director level and above are mentioned by name, since they can easily be identified anyhow.

7.2. What came before: the running up to and the planning of FP6 (up to 2002)

As a background to the ‘story’ about the period in which the gender monitoring studies took place, it is useful to keep in mind the history of gender mainstreaming uptake in the European Commission in the nineties, as sketched in the first Chapter of this manuscript. As has been described in Chapter two, the regime had been unfavourable towards gender issues in the DG Employment and Social Affairs at that time, causing backlash in that part of the Commission, whereas windows of opportunity had opened and initiatives taken to push gender equality forward in the DG Research. As I have shown, that this can happen is because the EC features as a liquid and compartmentalised bureaucracy which creates conditions that open opportunities for (mostly higher ranking) individuals with a clear programme, but which also closes opportunities to advance gender equality when people with an unfavourable stance to gender equality come to occupy positions of power.

The consideration of gender issues in EU research policy was supported by the then Research Commissioner Edith Cresson at the end of the nineties, but the upward move for gender equality concerns and gender mainstreaming in the DG Research can to a large extent be attributed to one femocrat in the administration, Nicole Dewandre. Still, it is also to be noted that the timeframe was generally favourable for initiating gender equality efforts, as a political opportunity window had opened following the Beijing Platform for Action and subsequent interest and attention raised for gender mainstreaming among civil society and political actors in the EU institutions (Hubert, 2010). This was at the EU level reinforced by the accession of Scandinavian countries, where women’s emancipation had a firm tradition (Braithwaite, 2000).

Dewandre herself points out the positive effects of civil society pressure coinciding with her own efforts and high-level political support. According to Dewandre (2002), the promotion of women’s participation in science at the European Union level in this period can be seen as a result of a number of converging factors. She points first to the gender equality principle enshrined in the EU Treaty, and to the important Commission Communication on mainstreaming (1996). Also women scientists themselves had been instrumental in placing the debate firmly on the European agenda: *“they and women’s organizations were extremely active and effective in voicing their concerns during the negotiation of EU research policy for the period 1998–2002”* (Dewandre, 2002). Notably the lobby organised by WISE (Women’s International Studies Europe) in the nineties has been important in this respect (Etzkowitz & Kemelgor, 2001; Pollack & Hafner-Burton, 2000; Verloo, 2004). Also the European Parliament has played a critical role (Hubert, 2010; Pollack & Hafner-Burton, 2000). About the Communication on “Women and Science: mobilising women to enrich European research” that was adopted on 17 February 1999,

Nicole Dewandre explains that this action plan was conceived to provide a platform for all stakeholders, including women scientists, policy-makers, and scientific institutions. *“It aimed to be inclusive in its approach, in order to reflect the wide diversity of approaches within the European Union. This is also why the term “science” is understood in its widest sense, ranging from natural to social science, including—but not restricted to—Science, Engineering, and Technology (SET).”* (Dewandre 2002)

Dewandre, with the support of Commissioner Cresson, had taken the first initiatives to bring experts, gender researchers from various countries, together and to launch studies on the status of gender equality in science, on the causes of women’s underrepresentation, exploring and unveiling the mechanisms at work. Various initiatives like setting up statistical monitoring, the analysis of the gendered nature of the ‘excellence’ notion, the examination of the status of women in industrial research, and others can be attributed to her.

When in January 2001 the Women and Science Unit was established within the DG Research, Nicole Dewandre was appointed as its first Head of Unit. She continued the commissioning of studies, and gender impact assessments were undertaken at the end of FP5 (which ran from 1998 till 2002) to take stock of women’s participation and the gender sensitiveness of the research undertaken under the Framework Programme. Based on all the knowledge that had been collected, a comprehensive gender mainstreaming plan was set out for FP6, which was to run from 2002 till 2006.

Dewandre left the Women and Science unit early 2004, and later became HoU for sustainable development in another directorate (Environment) in the DG Research. She was replaced *ad interim* by a female official (FO1) from the same unit.

In summary, it can be concluded that the introduction of gender mainstreaming in the research policy domain started with situational analyses and stocktaking initiatives, based upon which actions were defined in concertation with actively lobbying gender experts (with an academic women’s studies background). Thus, a staged approach was followed and the relevant civil society groups for this domain were involved, corresponding to two key conditions for effective mainstreaming (as set out in section 2.6.). The important instrumental role in the process played by one individual in particular within the institution remains remarkable, especially considering the fact that the attitudes towards gender change at the top of the Commission are generally not very favourable, as we will see further in this chapter. At the same time, however, it must be noted that this individual had the support of her Commissioner within the EC, as well as of the European Parliament. Also the wider political conditions at that time were favourable for the uptake of gender equality initiatives in the DG RTD.

7.3. Gender monitoring work in the context of a liquid bureaucracy

This section gives an account of the staff mobility in the DG RTD at the time when the gender monitoring studies took place and shows how this mobility affected the gender monitoring

work, as well as other activities related to the gender mainstreaming implementation. It follows as much as possible the chronological order of events.

As planned, gender monitoring studies (GMS) were commissioned (in 2004) to monitor progress towards gender equality under the Sixth Framework Programme. There were five different studies (so-called 'lots') for different parts of the Framework Programme, a separate study for the Information Society part of FP6, and one contract for a 'coordinating function' to assist the Commission. One of the important tasks for the contractor of the 'coordination lot' was eventually to synthesise and bring together the analyses from the various lots and to formulate the main overall conclusions across the whole of the Sixth RTD Framework Programme. The studies were launched at the beginning of 2005 and were foreseen to run for three years. Each study comprised three different monitoring rounds. At the time when the contracts for the respective gender monitoring studies were signed with the contractors, FO1 was the responsible Commission official in the Women and Science unit who was in charge of overseeing the coordination of the various lots and of liaising with the respective Commission officials ('chefs de fil') within the DG Research. Indeed, each study had its 'chefs de fil' who were officials whose task it was to provide the contractors with the necessary data. These officials were located in various directorates and units in the DG Research, depending on the scientific field they were working in. At the same time, FO1 was herself 'chef de fil' for 'my' study: the one covering Science and Society and Social Sciences and the Humanities (SSH), so-called 'Priority 7' under FP6. This has been important as FO1 had more 'ownership' over the totality of the GMS undertaking than other 'chefs de fil' located in other departments of the DG RTD (disconnected from the unit where gender was located), and was very cooperative, helpful and available. Although de facto an evaluation exercise, meant to monitor progress, or lack thereof, the GMS have at no point been treated as such in the European Commission, despite the strong evaluation culture in the EC in which the Science and Technology policy domain has been a forerunner (Summa & Toulemonde, 2002). No steering committee has been set up to accompany their implementation (as is commonly done for evaluation studies) and the evaluation unit of the DG has at no point been involved.

In 2005 and 2006, important changes in positions took place. By the end of June 2005, FO1 had been replaced as *ad interim* Head of Unit of the Women and Science unit by a male official (MO1), also acting *ad interim* while the post was published for an internal recruitment. Also at the end of June 2005, the Director Rainer Gerold of the then Directorate C, called 'Science and society' in which the unit Women and Science was located, retired. He was replaced as from 1 July 2005 by Jean-Michel Baer.

At the end of 2005, also the Director-General of the DG Research left his post and a new Director-General was appointed to the DG Research in January 2006: the Spaniard José Manuel Silva Rodríguez, an agricultural engineer who had been Director-General for the DG Agriculture and Rural Development from 1999 till 2005. When he assumed his new position, he decided to completely reorganise the directorate-general. As a result, also the directorates

in which the units were located that managed the parts of the FP6 falling within the scope of 'my' gender monitoring study were reshuffled and reorganised.

In March 2006, right after the approval by the EC of my report on the first monitoring round, *FOI* left the Women and Science unit to take up the function of assistant to the new Director Jean-Michel Baer in the same directorate C. A colleague in the Women and Science unit first received temporarily, then firmly the responsibility for the gender monitoring studies. There was hardly any handover, however, and the new officer in charge did not know for example the terms of the contract, and received a 'briefing' on the project and the data needed from myself, the contractor.

My two 'liaison persons' who were appointed as counterparts for the GMS in what then were the directorates K ('Social sciences and humanities; foresight') and M ('Investment in Research and links with other policies') and who were in charge of collecting and supplying the data necessary for the analyses also left their functions and moved elsewhere in the Commission. A replacement for them, with a view to an uninterrupted continuation of the monitoring exercise, had not been foreseen. As a result, data provision dried out from these sources and a process started of frequent enquiry (by myself, with my immediate counterpart for 'Science and Society' for the study) about the appointment of new contact persons. For one, the situation got fortunately resolved rather smoothly, and a new competent and cooperative liaison person, who had also been involved in the FP5 gender impact assessments, was appointed in June 2006. For the other, however, the situation was not solved, as that part of the unit where the data ought to be had been eliminated altogether, with responsibility for the continuing work added to another unit. Consequently, the collection of data from that source became utterly difficult despite the efforts from the liaison person.

The 'Women and Science' unit was re-organised in October 2006 and became a bigger unit entitled 'Scientific Culture and Gender Issues' under a directorate renamed 'Science, economy and society' which now also incorporated the unit in charge of 'Research in the economic, social sciences and humanities'. The former 'Women and Science' unit had suddenly grown from a handful of people to about twenty, which meant a *de facto* significant promotion for the then formally appointed Head of Unit (*MOI*), but also a dilution of the gender expertise in the directorate and a demotion of gender which lost its prominent position as the 'raison d'être' of the unit.

In the contracts of all GMS lots, there was a provision to provide input to the EC project officers in charge of negotiations on how the GAPs could be improved, with the aim to assist them in the contract preparation stage. This provision was however never used. The most plausible explanation for this fact is that the officers in charge of contract negotiations had not been informed about, and hence did not know the existence, of this possibility to mobilise gender expertise to enhance the quality of the GAPs, and have therefore not called upon

the contractors working on the gender monitoring studies. Moreover, due to the changes of liaison officers for the GMS, even these officers appeared ignorant about the provision (as I discovered when I told my own liaison person about this option). This non-use of the important opportunity to mobilise gender experts in order to enhance gender equality provisions in the to-be-funded projects is a striking example of how the gender mainstreaming implementation has been (negatively) affected by the institutional functioning of the EC.

In general, collecting and obtaining the necessary data and raw material to perform the analyses for the GMS has been difficult. The main reason for this is that the necessary documents and reports were not all available on the internal shared computer system of the Commission, but appeared to be scattered at various places. As a consequence, some pieces of information were very hard to retrieve, while others remained missing. Not only appeared the data fragmented and was it to be collected from various sources, the information contained in it also regularly proved to be inconsistent. For example, 'similar' tables established by the Commission staff as annex to evaluation reports, sometimes had different definitions as a basis, which made the data contained in these tables incomparable.⁸⁷

One EC official, a gender scholar who worked as seconded national agent in the DG Research in the unit in charge of Social Sciences and Humanities read at her own initiative (around mid-2006) the draft new work programme for SSH with a gender lens, pointing out the gender relevance in relation to the work programme topics. Upon submission of her work to her Head of Unit, the reaction she got was rejection: there would be 'too much gender' in the work programme this way. Disappointed by the bureaucracy and its institutional culture⁸⁸ she decided to leave the Commission soon afterwards, although she had passed a 'concours' to become an official *fonctionnaire*. Her departure meant a further diminishing of the gender expertise in the directorate.

In the course of the study, while FP6 evolved, an aggravation of the difficulties to obtain data and feedback from liaison persons was experienced. This has been due to different factors: the preparation of FP7 which laid a heavy workload on the Commission staff in the DG Research, and the restructuring of the DG Research in general: every two to three months, a new organogram of the DG was published. In a recent publication (European Commission, 2010), the Commission itself recognises these problems. It admits that "*the [gender monitoring] studies encountered difficulties in collecting data from the Commission services, due in particular to the lack of timely and adequate information systems. Problems were also experienced due to structural reorganisations in the Commission, as well as personnel changes.*" (European Commission 2010:86)

⁸⁷ For example, tables in an evaluation report (of call 13 of Science and Society) are – according to the title – supposed to give the sex breakdown of project coordinators and participants in 'proposals evaluated' and 'ranked proposals'. When checking figures however, it appeared that the sex breakdown given is for 'proposals submitted' and 'proposals above the threshold', while the figures that were actually needed cannot be derived from these.

⁸⁸ Source: personal interview

The above account clearly shows that there has been a very high level of staff turnover at the various hierarchical levels within the DG RTD at the time of the gender monitoring work. To the extent that these people had been involved with gender-related work, they took this knowledge with them while no proper hand-over mechanisms ensured a smooth continuation of the work. And not only was staff moved, also changes took place in the internal architecture of the DG since the unit where gender was located moved and was merged to other policy concerns (notably 'scientific culture'). All this proves how the liquid nature of the EC, marked by excessive staff mobility, knowledge not staying in place, a human resources management that hinders institutional learning and the building up of specialist knowledge, aggravated by ineffective electronic information systems, has negatively affected not only the gender monitoring work, but more generally the implementation of the gender mainstreaming plan under FP6.

7.4. The DG Research and its commitment to gender equality: rhetorical or real?

Stories about resistance

In this section, I describe four 'stories' based on my own experiences with the DG RTD which can be considered as different manifestations of resistance, and which may clarify the presence and absence of commitment of the DG RTD to gender equality. The first two stories are examples of active resistance on the part of individual EC officers. The third story shows that the planned shrinking of the gender mainstreaming approach for FP7 was pushed through despite explicit protests against it. The fourth story contains different examples of non-action.

Story 1: 'Active resistance'

I was invited to act as independent evaluator for an evaluation session of proposals submitted under an FP6 'innovation' call. This area and call fell under the responsibility of the 'Research and SMEs' unit of directorate M 'Investment in Research and links with other policies'. The evaluation took place in Brussels early 2005. At the start of such evaluation session, the evaluators first receive a briefing by the Commission. While the 'Women and Science' unit had prepared a set of slides to explain the concerns for gender equality and the dual approach, and what exactly is expected from the evaluators, this slide show was not used for this session. After the briefing, the evaluation process includes an individual reading and evaluation of each proposal by a number of evaluators (usually three), after which a 'consensus meeting' is organised for each individual proposal, during which the evaluators have to discuss and decide on a common scoring for the proposal on each evaluation criterion. Following that meeting, a rapporteur has to draft the consensus report for the proposal, which has to be signed by each of the evaluators. Per proposal, the process is accompanied by a Commission officer whose role it is to moderate and to support the evaluators, but who may not intervene content-wise in the evaluation. It happened so that on the last day of the session, a Friday, the officer that accompanied my panel insisted that I removed a phrase from a consensus report for which I had been the rapporteur. The phrase in question was a critical comment on the proposal for

not adequately addressing the relevant gender issues in the research. The officer, a woman, did so despite the fact that the peer evaluators had agreed with the phrase being integrated in the report. Although I do not know this for sure, the explanation for her demand is likely to be found in the fact that she herself would have been the person who would have to run the contract negotiations with the research team, and that she felt uncomfortable having to negotiate on gender issues. When I objected to removing the phrase, she refused to release the panel that afternoon, thus literally keeping the panel hostage. As peer evaluators had to catch planes back to their respective countries, there was not much choice for us than to give in – as it had become late afternoon and other responsible officers and the independent observer had already left the building, so could not be involved in the conflict anymore. However, I reported on the event in the evaluation form which evaluators are asked to complete, expecting that somebody would take this up. This did not happen. Moreover, much to my surprise, the same officer was by June 2006 appointed as ‘chef de fil’ for the GMS that covered the ‘Research and SMEs’ area.

Referring to my earlier operational definition of resistance, this example can be labelled as explicit resistance on the part of an individual, overtly expressed by her action. Still, there remains some doubt as to whether this explicit resistance was provoked by her feeling of incapacity, or rather by hostility to the notion of gender equality itself.

Story 2: ‘Active resistance’

An independent panel of high-level experts, chaired by Professor Ramon Marimon, had evaluated the effectiveness of the New Instruments introduced in the Sixth Framework Programme (FP6): the Networks of Excellence and the Integrated Projects (European Commission, 2004). These projects were generally the biggest, both in terms of budget and of consortium size: IP and NOE contracts together represented only 9% of FP6 contracts and yet they involved 31% of FP6 participation and consumed 48% of FP6 funding (European Commission, 2008b). These were also the projects for which the submission of a Gender Action Plan within the proposal was mandatory. The evaluation by the Marimon Panel was conducted from October 2003 till June 2004, and was based on information deriving from the first calls for proposals under FP6 and feedback received from participants. Upon submission of a draft of the report, the Commission’s Head of Unit supervising the panel insisted repeatedly and strongly with the rapporteur of the panel to mention in the report that the horizontal, cross-cutting concerns, and the Gender Action Plan in particular, were ‘too burdensome’ for the research community.⁸⁹ Upon this pressure, the rapporteur went back to the raw data and evaluation results to verify, but confirmed that such observation or finding could not be derived from the work. None of the stakeholders consulted had issued such complaint. The rapporteur was supported by Professor Bullinger from Fraunhofer Institute, who took stance against the EC official, confirming that at no point this had been a finding of the experts, and that such point could therefore not be

⁸⁹ Source: interview with rapporteur of the Marimon Panel

put in the Panel's report. Nevertheless, in the running up to FP7, when rumours were around about a possible discontinuation of the GAPs, officials in the DG Research still claimed (in oral communications with myself and others) that the Marimom report had identified the GAP as burdensome and had stressed the need for simplification, and that this was one of the reasons why the GAPs might be dropped.

Also this example can be recognised as explicit resistance on the part of an individual, expressed in the practice. While this individual did orally express objections to gender equality measures, his expressions did not reveal an explicit rejection of the goal of gender equality itself.

Story 3: Ignoring protests

On 21 June 2005, the Helsinki Group had a meeting in Luxembourg. The Helsinki Group, named after its first meeting in Helsinki in November 1999, meets twice a year and brings together national representatives from all the EU Member States and countries associated to the Commission's RTD Framework Programmes. The Group aims to promote the participation and equality of women in the sciences on a Europe-wide basis, and helps the Commission to collect and compile data and indicators. At their June 2005 meeting, the gender monitoring studies were announced to the Helsinki Group, and the responsible Head of Unit presented the Commission's proposals for FP7. In reaction to this presentation, the Group members highlighted their concern at the way in which gender issues would be dealt with in FP7: regretting that horizontal issues (including gender) be removed from the evaluation phase for reasons of 'simplification' and urging to keep gender issues in the evaluation phase in order that all those preparing proposals are made aware of the gender requirements; stressing that gender issues be considered at the proposal stage when teams are being put together; emphasising the need to consider women's participation in consortia as a management issue; underlining the importance of considering Gender Action Plans also as an issue of quality and the need for a consistent Commission approach to gender issues; stressing the importance of considering both women's participation and the gender dimension of research content; and the need to maintain momentum (European Commission, 2005c).

Despite the express criticism and warning from the Helsinki Group, echoed also by the contractors of the gender monitoring studies, the European Commission persisted with its plans for a 'shrunk' approach to gender in FP7.

The example discussed here is recognisable as explicit institutional resistance on the part of the Commission, expressed through its practice.

Story 4: Non-communication and non-action

A report on the first monitoring round for my gender monitoring study was submitted to the Commission at the end of 2005 and was approved in January 2006. The results of this first round of my study only (covering Science and Society and Social Sciences and Humanities) were presented to the Science and Society National Contact Points (NCPs) at the occasion of their meeting in Brussels on 11 January 2005, and again to the Helsinki Group members

at the occasion of their meeting in Brussels on 19-20 January 2006. The results of the other contractors' work were not presented at that meeting, and neither were questions asked by the NCPs or Helsinki Group members about the other GMS lots. However, one Helsinki Group member (from Italy) did make some critical comments: she pointed out that the gender balance in research teams is not a criterion that is marked during the proposal evaluation and that this ought to be included as an issue to be evaluated under the 'management' evaluation criterion. Further, she expressed criticism on the Commission's plans to move gender issues to the negotiation stages under FP7, and noted in this context that Mr. Achilleas Mitsos, the then Director-General of the DG Research, address to the Helsinki Group was interpreted by the Helsinki Group members as a sign that the issue is not taken seriously enough (European Commission, 2006a). About the data collection for the GMS, the HoU of the Women and Science unit (still *MOI*), recognised that 'due to problems with the computer system, the availability and access to the data is poor' (2006:3), to which another officer added that data collection was done manually. The latter remark appeared as an attempt to reassure the Group that efforts were nevertheless undertaken. The French members of the Helsinki Group, in their minutes of the meeting, underlined the need for including gender considerations in the criteria to be marked during the proposal evaluation, and the difficulties that existed with regard to availability and coherence of raw data for the GMS (Baron & Le Feuvre, 2006). At the Group's next meeting, on 27-28 June 2006, a general overview of the status and purpose of the GMS was briefly outlined by DG Research officials to the Group members, although no results or preliminary findings across the studies were presented. Neither results of the next monitoring rounds, nor the final findings of the Gender Monitoring Studies were presented to the Helsinki Group, or any other stakeholder group for that matter, anymore later on. The terms of reference for the monitoring studies stipulated however that the EC planned to organise a 'gender conference' with presentations of the results of the various GMS lots, with a view to providing input for the preparation of FP7. This conference never took place. As the example above, the present story can be labelled as explicit institutional resistance on the part of the Commission, expressed through its practice (explicit non-action).

What do these stories tell?

Considering the various stories, a first distinction to be made is between the individual and the apparently institutional resistance manifestations. In the first example, it may be assumed that the individual who so openly expressed resistance felt unsure or incapable of taking up gender-related issues during the negotiation phase. In the second example, the individual that expressed resistance had a (middle) management position and was as such in a position of power. According to the rapporteur of the Marimon panel, the resistance of this person can be attributed to his belief that the research community (his 'clientele') in fact did not want to deal with gender issues, which would be perceived as distracting from the 'real research'. In the view that the policy-makers (politicians) impose these gender issues upon the research community, he took up their 'defence'. The last two examples can be seen as forms of institutional resistance, one showing that the

explicit protests from the Helsinki Group members against the Commission's plans in terms of gender mainstreaming for FP7 were ignored, the other showing that the Helsinki Group was not kept informed about the results of the gender monitoring work and that a planned event to make these results public and to discuss them in view of the FP7 preparations never took place. Such manifestations of resistance are more troublesome as they suggest some 'orchestration' behind the decisions (not to take into account the position of the Helsinki Group, not to inform the Helsinki Group, not to organise the planned event), which are not likely to have been taken by one individual. Moreover, while the impression might have been created that the decision-making about FP7 happened as a result of a 'democratic' process in which stakeholders could provide inputs, it appears that such inputs did not find their way into the final decisions, and this did not happen in a transparent way. Attempts (undertaken by myself) to locate the origin of this resistance and to unravel the process of this type of decision-making have systematically failed. This lack of transparency about the internal decision-making may also be a characteristic of the liquid bureaucracy since, with people moving functions so often, the power they hold also moves, and alliances can be broken and new ones built quickly. This makes the whole process of decision-making and the manoeuvring that goes with it very difficult to unravel. Anyhow, the above accounts show that both open and covert forms of resistance against actions aiming towards gender equality can be detected within the European Commission. Furthermore, the above stories also demonstrate how the overall attitudes towards gender change within the DG RTD changed in the course of the framework programme cycle (from the end of FP5 and the start of FP6 to the end of FP6 and the start of FP7), from open to gender issues to a clearly more closed position towards gender. The staff moves that took place in the DG RTD in this period and their effects on the on-going work (as described in the previous section) may at least in part explain this evolution.

7.5. The gender monitoring studies at the end of FP6 and during the preparation of FP7

This section provides further insights into how the transition from FP6 to FP7 happened, confirming largely the conclusions drawn already from the earlier sections in this chapter.

While FP6 and the GMS progressed, the preparations for FP7 had started. As the GMS contractors convened once a year in Brussels to report to the Commission and each other on the status of their work, it appeared that all shared the view that gender should be a criterion to be marked during the evaluation of proposals. Despite the strong recommendation to do so, the reaction from the Commission's responsible Head of Unit, *MOI*, made clear there was little chance such recommendation would be picked up. Rather, the contractors were advised, while of course they could not be prevented from making the recommendation, to come up with more realistic recommendations.

As preparations for FP7 continued, rumours started to circulate that the GAPs would be abolished in the new FP. The, overall rather vague, motivations that were given - first orally, later also in writing (see further) - dealt with concerns about overly bureaucratic approaches,

pursuits of simplification and disappointing results of the GAPs. The GMS contractors expressed their concern about these plans, pointing out that the GAPs clearly had brought about increased awareness for gender within the research community and warning the EC about giving the wrong signals about its commitments to gender equality when the GAPs would be dropped altogether. Rather, it was suggested to maintain the tool, but to improve it. Despite all this, it did not seem that many efforts were undertaken by the responsible unit to promote gender and the continued use of the GAP in FP7.

And indeed, as FP7 took form, it became public that the GAP was abandoned as mandatory instrument, gender mainstreaming efforts appeared largely demoted and weakened without clear justification. ‘Simplification’ was claimed and (oral) reference was made to some complaints that would have been received from important research institutions saying that the so-called ‘horizontal concerns’ in the framework programme are ‘burdensome’. Such complaint letters were however not made public, and no trace of any such complaints could be found in the results of the ERA consultation either⁹⁰ (as reported upon above in section 4.5.). In July 2008, the Research Commissioner Mr. Potočník repeated the same argument in a public answer to a written parliamentary question by Erika Mann (European Parliament, 2008b): “[*Gender Action Plans*] have been evaluated and although they were successful in raising awareness of gender issues, they have been perceived as an administrative burden and often misunderstood.” (European Parliament, 2008a)

Upon completion of FP6, in May 2008, the Commission appointed an Expert Group⁹¹ for the ex-post evidence-based evaluation of FP6, with as overall objective “*to provide an evaluation of the rationale, implementation and achievements of FP6 in order to provide inputs to future Framework Programme (FPs) and policy design*”. The resulting report of the Group (Rietschel et al., 2009) does not make any reference to the gender monitoring studies or their reports having been used as input for its work. Neither are these reports listed among the 102 references used for the assessment. Instead, as far as gender was concerned, they based their evaluation on a self-assessment report, produced by the European Commission, entitled ‘Gender Equality Report Sixth Framework Programme’ (European Commission, 2008c). This report dealt only with women’s participation in FP6 and not with the gender dimension of the research content. It appeared as if the EC had not even mentioned the gender monitoring studies to the panel. This would confirm that the Commission’s decentralised evaluation model, in which operational units that are in charge of running actions also program and manage the evaluations thereof, may lead to a tendency to suppress critical results, as suggested by Summa and Toulemonde (2002).

In February 2009, the expert group that evaluated the FP6 programmes wrote in its final report that the decision to abandon the GAPs in FP7 has been ‘an example of unfortunate simplification’;

⁹⁰ As I analysed for the DG Research the answers to the ‘Science and Society’ related questions, I had access to all the raw data, including position papers that were not submitted in the standard consultation format.

⁹¹ This expert panel was chaired by the German Ernst Th. Rietschel; rapporteur was Erik Arnold.

because it took away an incentive for the research community to deal with gender issues - or rather to encourage women's participation, in the (shrunk) view of the evaluators. The group further wrote that *"the Commission should make female participation a 'tie-breaker' criterion when considering proposals of equal merit in future"* (2009:26).

The finalisation of the GMS and the publication of their reports did not happen without difficulties. Several contractors were faced with the fact that their reports, and the findings formulated in them, were met with resistance by the Commission officials⁹². Requests from these officials for changes to the reports (for example to drop certain parts) were not welcomed by the contractors and discussions about the way forward caused considerable delays in the publication of the reports. A number of the GMS reports have remained unpublished and for at least one, only partial results were made public. This fact seems to confirm the idea (as suggested in the previous chapter) that the EC might have deliberately tried to keep uncovered the disappointing results in terms of progress in FP6 towards making research gender-sensitive. Still, this seems to have gone largely unnoticed and despite the fact that significant amounts of public money were invested in these studies, it appears as if nobody has really been interested in the results of the studies. No signal of any enquiry by the European Parliament, the Helsinki Group or the European Platform for Women Scientists about the missing studies followed. It indeed seemed as if they were not 'missed' at all.

The overall synthesis report on the gender monitoring studies, also compiled by an external contractor and published in May 2009, confirms the difficulties met by the contractors in charge of the gender monitoring work and also attributes these to the liquid nature of the institution. The report states on page 7: *"Apart from different methodological approaches, the studies also encountered difficulties within the EC services. When the studies started, a 'chef de fil' (person in charge) was elected for each study area, including the Coordinating study, to manage the study within their area of expertise. Due to many reasons including encouraged mobility within the Commission, and indeed the Commissions capacity to employ temporary staff, these persons in charge and often their Directors and their Unit Heads, changed on a regular basis. The result of this was that most of the staff involved at the start of the study had moved by the time the study finished. This had many repercussions. The expertise was diluted as the studies progressed and in some cases there was a lack of willingness in assisting in the process at all. If this exercise were to be repeated, the problems that were encountered during these studies should be addressed."* (European Commission, 2009)

In summary, this section has again confirmed how the liquid nature of the EC, a specific institutional feature, affected the gender mainstreaming implementation. It also confirms that, as persons in key positions changed functions, the DG RTD has over time evolved from

⁹² Source: Informal e-mail exchanges between GMS contractors.

quite open to rather closed for gender equality issues. This evolution significantly reduced the opportunities for further advancing gender equality in the planning stage of the next framework programme.

7.6. Framework Programme 7: from deceleration to a complete stop?

Rather than improving and reinforcing the measures of FP6 by complementing them with awareness-raising and capacity-building initiatives, a stand-alone new form of specific action was introduced in FP7: the development of a gender in research toolkit and the introduction of one-day gender training sessions⁹³ based on the toolkit and aiming mainly at the research community.

With how it conceived FP7, the Commission appeared to contend itself with having gender issues explicitly addressed in specific topics of *certain* FP7 Work Programmes and Calls – not even in all, as may become clear also from the answer by Commissioner Potočník to a parliamentary written question: *“The Women and Science Working Group is an inter-service structure whose Mandate is inter alia to provide input in the practical implementation of gender mainstreaming in FP7. [...] Meetings are organised regularly in order to ensure that the gender dimension of various research topics is taken into account, as it was for instance in the work programmes for transport, nanotechnologies and health in 2007. In each work programme the Commission insists in any case on the need for equal participation of women and men”* (European Parliament, 2008a). This suggested that the Commission had given up on the requirement of seeing gender mainstreamed in all research projects where there are relevant sex and/or gender issues associated with the subject of the research. While this is not a *discursive* ‘shrinking’ of the approach, in the words of Lombardo, Meier and Verloo, it does mean a shrinking of the approach in the practice of the gender mainstreaming strategy. Although the EC was initially not explicit in this, it seemed to have lifted the requirement for mainstreaming from the project holders, bringing the mainstreaming responsibility back to the institutional policy level, the framework programme level, where the work programmes would take gender into account. Project holders’ responsibility became limited to encouraging women’s participation.

In the meantime, the Commission has confirmed this conscious decision in its publication on Stocktaking 10 years of “Women in Science” policy by the European Commission (1999-2009) (European Commission, 2010), in which it states that a new policy direction regarding the position of women in science in FP7 was decided, focusing on the research institutions (rather than on the women scientists themselves) where the Commission *“would like to encourage a modernization of the working culture through making the human resource systems more gender and diversity aware.”* (2010:25). In this same publication, it recognises that this change of direction transmitted the message it was less committed to gender equality in FP7 than it had been in FP6. The Commission furthermore admits that an analysis of the Work Programmes

⁹³ The need for ‘gender training’ for the different actors was pointed out in several of the gender monitoring study reports, including my own.

published from 2007 to 2010 in the various Specific Programmes of FP7 has revealed a drastic reduction in the presence of gender-related topics, indicating the failure of its plan to ensure gender is integrated in the content of FP7-funded research by rendering Work Programmes gender-sensitive. Moreover, it admits that monitoring gender aspects in FP7 (both on women's participation and on the gender dimension in the research itself) is hardly possible as no tools had been foreseen for this and no data has been collected by the different directorates within the DG Research. Summarising the progress of the integration of gender in the research content under the EU Framework Programmes, the Commission itself concludes that it evolved *"from a modest start to a strong thrust, followed by an unexpected complete stop"* (2010:216).

At the start of the assignment of the development of the toolkit and training activities early 2009, as the contract had been awarded to my organisation following an open public procurement process, I asked our project officer about the chances of the GAP being re-introduced in FP7 possibly at the time of its mid-term review in 2010. I was answered there was no chance at all of this, as *"virtually everything in the Commission had come to a standstill, awaiting the appointment and installation of the new College of Commissioners"* (which eventually happened in November 2009). With the primary target of the one-day training sessions being the research community, there were still no provisions foreseen to train the Commission staff who had to assume responsibilities in the implementation of FP7, be it as call coordinators, evaluation moderators, negotiators or as project officers. This shows how the Commission represents the problem as being primarily located outside its own boundaries, in contrast to the evidence provided in this work. The launch of this initiative, targeting the research community, furthermore seemed incoherent with the decision to take back the responsibility for mainstreaming gender in the research content-wise to the framework programme level. Indeed, one could expect that such decision would enhance the perceived need for capacity-building and more broadly a pre-occupation with conditions for effective gender mainstreaming within the own organisation. However, there were no signs of such concerns.

In March 2009, a new HoU of the 'Scientific culture and gender issues' unit had taken up the post, a female officer again, who had been heading other units in quite 'masculine' fields in the DG RTD before. By then, the 'Scientific culture and gender issues' unit had only three persons left to deal with gender issues, while there were twelve staff 2,5 years earlier – and activities had not been reduced. She undertook specific actions to stimulate the trainings also inside the DG, for example by having the Deputy Director-General sign a letter to the staff of the directorate-general to encourage them to participate in trainings. A letter to the Directors and Heads of Unit followed, encouraging them to organise trainings for their staff. These positive signals indicated that a redressing of the seemingly inconsistent approach to gender in FP7 could have been underway.

However, early June 2010, a new Director-General assumes the position of Director-General in the DG Research, the Dutch Robert-Jan Smits. As it happens upon such change at the

top⁹⁴, for reasons of personal imprint and for breaking previous power relations, he decides to restructure the DG. At the end of 2010, the draft of the new organogram, to enter into force in January 2011, shows that the directorate 'Science, Society and Economy' is dismantled, that the unit 'Scientific culture and gender issues' is dissolved and that a new unit called 'Ethics and Gender' is created. This new unit, headed by a man again, is bigger than the unit that hosted gender issues before. However, of the 39 staff members in the unit (by February 2011), only a handful are to deal with gender.

The present section, while painfully showing the further demotion of gender issues under FP7, has also clearly confirmed that even within the unit in charge of gender issues in the DG RTD, the local attitudes towards (and the support for) gender equality as a policy goal changed with the coming and going of the people in charge of that unit. The visible efforts undertaken by the unit and more particularly the initiatives taken by the head of unit (or lack of such initiatives) are signals thereof.

7.7. Conclusions from the insight in the process

The focus of the present chapter has been on the context of and the background against which the gender monitoring work during FP6, by the DG Research, had to be done. It also sheds light on the difficulties and barriers that were encountered. The findings from the participatory observation mainly contribute to clarifying how the organisational features of the European Commission have affected its gender mainstreaming undertakings in the RTD Framework Programmes, and thus also the potential it holds.

This chapter confirms that the internal features of the European Commission, or at least of its DG Research, correspond to the embryonic definition of a 'liquid bureaucracy' as put forward by Verloo and Roggeband. Not only is the EC marked by an utterly high level of staff mobility, this mobility is not supported by adequate procedures. Agents change functions often and rather abruptly, resulting in overall high levels of staff turnover within a given department, while no adequate measures are in place for replacements to take over smoothly, to ensure a proper transfer of knowledge, contacts, duties, obligations, etc. Consequently, staff take knowledge with them and as the institution does not dispose of alternative (information technology) solutions to compensate for human-based knowledge not staying in place, the structurally embedded staff mobility is detrimental for the organisation's capacity for learning.

The present research has confirmed that the human resources policy within the Commission does not allow for effective learning and neither does an 'institutional memory' exist nor is it being built. Instead, with internal mobility being formally encouraged, the liquidity of the bureaucracy appears to be *organised* even. As evidenced by this analysis, knowledge (in our case 'gender expertise') in such context cannot be built up, slips away each time and does not

⁹⁴ Source: Interview with former Cabinet member of two EC Commissioners

stay in place. Due to the staff mobility, initiatives that were started up by individuals are taken over by others when the first person leaves and in the absence of a proper hand-over, the second person feels less sense of responsibility and no 'ownership' of initiatives. As a consequence, there is also lower motivation on the part of the civil servants to realise effective outcomes. This is confirmed by the Commission, which writes that *"the lack of ownership for promoting gender equality made it hard to meet gender-related objectives."* (European Commission 2010:209)

As people in different departments and functions within the European Commission come and go, they bring with them different situations of alliances, knowledge, motivation, and empowerment – a situation which favours the existence of varying local support for gender equality initiatives and explains why these local contexts are of such highly dynamic nature. Even within the unit in charge of gender within the DG Research, the support for gender equality as a policy goal has evolved following the staff changes in the Head of Unit position. Against this reality, it becomes clear that within the European Commission, windows of opportunity for pushing forward (or for keeping back) gender equality open and close, constituting some sort of 'rollercoaster' in terms of the potential of gender equality initiatives. This situation of course complicates matters for those civil society organisations who want to lobby the Commission, since it is very difficult for them to spot and grasp the windows of opportunity within the Commission when they occur. The present work has shown why the position of gender as a policy goal can be different in every DG, as suggested by Stratigaki (2005), and that it may even vary within directorates and units (as shown in Chapter 4, the unit where the Descartes Prizes were hosted was much more closed to gender), depending on the department's history, its policy context and the people staffing it. There is not one position towards gender equality as a policy goal in the EC, but a multiplicity of local attitudes towards gender change. This explains that 'pockets of resistance' against gender mainstreaming initiatives can be found inside the Commission.

Furthermore, reinforced by the fact that the large majority of the higher hierarchical positions in the DG Research - and more widely within the European Commission - remain occupied by men⁹⁵, the 'deep culture' that reigns is generally not very open to gender equality considerations and to concerns for gender mainstreaming, and the (local) attitudes towards gender relations and gender change within the organisation are hardly challenged. While there was an overall favourable situation for pushing forward gender equality within the DG Research at the end of FP5 and at the start of FP6, this situation changed completely with the coming of the (then) new Director General and the subsequent reorganisation of the DG. As the findings of the research have shown, there has been a loss of momentum and a general decrease of results as regards gender mainstreaming in the second half of FP6, and early signs for FP7 are not promising improvements (European Commission, 2010).

Taking into account all these elements, it is hardly conceivable that even an effective gender

⁹⁵ As most recently confirmed by the EC in its publication *Stocktaking 10 years of "Women in Science" policy* by the European Commission (1999-2010) on page 89, where it states that as of 31 December 2008, only 20% of senior management positions in the EC was held by women; 21% in middle management and 40% in administrator, non-management posts.

mainstreaming can be done by an institution that is a liquid, compartmentalised bureaucracy – in which the human resources management does not provide for ‘hard incentives’ for officials (as suggested by Hafner-Burton and Pollack in 2008, and put forward as a fourth condition for effective gender mainstreaming in Chapter 2 above) to support or promote gender equality and gender mainstreaming (for example through personal assessments, on which promotions are made dependent). Thus, the lack of internal accountability structures where gender mainstreaming is concerned reinforces the negative effects that the organisational features have on the strategy.

The present chapter also allows to draw some further conclusions in relation to the other research questions. In terms of the conceptualisation of the goal of gender equality, it became clear at the start of FP7 that the ‘shrunk’ approach to gender equality, observed in the implementation of FP6, had become structurally fixed in the planning of FP7: the main focus in FP7 is on women’s participation.

As regards the conditions for effective gender mainstreaming, the first condition deals with the organisation’s willingness to address its own deep culture and values. The findings described in this chapter confirm that the Commission’s institutional features of liquidity and compartmentalisation stand in the way for effective gender mainstreaming. Still, this barrier is ignored by the Commission and problems are represented as situated elsewhere (as we have seen that the most recent toolkit and training activities on the integration of gender in research are targeted mainly at the research community while no measures are put in place for upgrading gender knowledge among Commission staff), evidencing the institution’s reluctance to address those impediments to gender mainstreaming that are at its own core. This attitude structurally undermines the potential of gender mainstreaming by the Commission.

As regards the second condition, it can be recognised that also for FP7 a staged approach was followed whereby a planning stage preceded the implementation stage: during the implementation of FP6, the preparations for FP7 started. However, since stages overlapped (FP6 implementation and FP7 planning), the delineation of the stages became somewhat blurred. This rendered the process rather intransparent and made it difficult to understand where the responsibilities for the decision-making in the planning stage of FP7 were located. As was the case in FP6, the structural provisions put in place for FP7 did not equip all actors. While an awareness-raising and capacity-building initiative was launched targeting the research community, there were no such efforts for strengthening gender awareness and competence inside the institution.

Where the openness to non-hegemonic voices and external gender expertise is concerned, the analysis has shown that although such input was structurally foreseen (through the gender monitoring studies), the EC has not been receptive to expert input at the time of FP6 and during FP7 preparations. This may be an indication of institutional resistance to interference that may affect its powers.

8. The potential of gender mainstreaming implementation by the European Commission

This work undertook to identify the explanatory factors for the variable and overall rather disappointing results of the gender mainstreaming implementation by the European Commission in FP6. The approach followed for the analysis started by the identification of variability and unevenness where these occurred, after which a deeper examination could be undertaken of the mechanisms that have been at work leading to these effects. More specifically, the analysis sought to understand to what extent variability and unevenness can be explained in terms of the factors identified in Chapter two: was the gender equality goal clearly conceptualised and understood, were the key conditions for effective gender mainstreaming fulfilled, has resistance occurred, and how have the institutional features impacted upon the gender mainstreaming implementation.

The different empirical chapters of this work have subsequently looked into the structural provisions and measures that have been put in place during the planning stage of the gender mainstreaming implementation in FP6, women's participation, the integration of gender considerations in the research projects, the Gender Action Plan (as new gender mainstreaming instrument in FP6) and finally at the wider institutional context of the case.

The analyses have revealed variability and unevenness in various respects, and allowed to gain insights in how these effects came to being. These findings are the focus of the conclusions. However, despite the undeniably variable gender mainstreaming implementation in FP6, it must be recognised that there are nonetheless also clear positive effects. Women's participation in framework programme level structures has risen in comparison to FP5, some good practice examples where gender is really embedded in the research project could be found, the research agenda included gender specific research and funds have been made available for this purpose, a whole set of gender specific research projects has been undertaken and the Gender Action Plans have contributed to raising awareness for gender issues. Such effects would not have been realised without the efforts that were undertaken, underpinned and supported by conceptual and structural provisions in FP6. Notably the maintained 40% target for women's participation, the fact that for the first time two calls exclusively aiming at gender specific research were launched in FP6, as well as the introduction of the Gender Action Plan as mandatory tool for the largest projects have been instrumental in making these impacts possible.

8.1. Variability and unevenness in the gender mainstreaming implementation in FP6

Variability and unevenness could be identified both in the planning and in the implementation stage of FP6.

In terms of planning, we have seen that the different actors were not fully equipped and the provisions and measures put in place for each of them to fulfil their gender-related roles have been uneven. Also important shortcomings in the planning of the gender mainstreaming implementation were identified, among which the most important are probably the fact that gender was not a criterion to be marked during the proposal evaluation process, the absence of awareness-raising and capacity-building actions, and also the absence of accountability structures and hard incentives for the various actors to take up their gender-related responsibilities.

Looking at the actual implementation, the uptake of the gender mainstreaming responsibilities across the actors varied, as well as the performance of the various actors, both at the framework programme level and at the project level. At the framework programme level, it appeared that better results were obtained in terms of women's participation in the area of Science in Society than for the Social Sciences and Humanities – which both performed better than the rest of FP6. An exception was found with the Descartes Prizes, however, which have consistently performed below the expectations in terms of gender mainstreaming. At the project level, some addressed gender in a fragmented way (for example by planning certain activities, but not foreseeing specific inputs nor outputs) while others were found to have really embedded gender considerations in their projects. Noteworthy is the unevenness that was found between female and male project coordinators in how they integrated gender considerations in their projects: women are more likely than men to do better in this respect. However, this unevenness was not reflected in higher success rates for women than for men, an indication of gender-bias in the selection of proposal for funding due to the fact that gender was not among the criteria to be marked during the proposal evaluation process. The research has also shown that projects performed better in terms of gender when gender issues were explicitly pointed out in the formal FP documents.

When considering in detail the Gender Action Plans (GAP), variability can be noticed in their quality and also in the availability and quality of the GAP reporting. Unevenness was found in the impact of the negotiations on the quality of the GAPs: in a number of cases, an improvement could be noticed between the GAP as it was included in the proposal and the GAP in the technical annex to the contract with the EC, in other occasions no improvements or even a decrease of the GAP quality was identified.

Also in terms of how the (double) gender equality objective was addressed in the practice, unevenness was found: actors either duly considered both women's participation and the gender dimension of the research content, or paid attention only to women's participation (looking for quantitative representation of women).

Furthermore, unevenness has been noticed in time: as FP6 progressed, the efforts – and consequently also the results stemming from them – towards promoting gender equality appeared to go down.

All this has translated into unevenness also in terms of the results of the gender mainstreaming implementation. As regards women's participation at the framework programme level, progress could be noted. This was not the case however when looking at the statistics at the project level. Considering the integration of gender considerations in the projects, the results remain overall below the expectations, despite the fact that some good practice cases where gender was truly embedded in the project could be identified.

Lastly, we have seen that the 'shrunk' approach to gender (with a focus on women's participation at the expense of the integration of gender considerations in the research itself) in the practice of the implementation stage of FP6, has resulted in a formal fixing of this shrunk approach at the framework programme level in the planning of FP7.

8.2. Conceptualisation of the gender equality goal

We have seen (in section 2.3.) that the theories about concepts consider different visions and perspectives on gender equality from an 'endpoint' point of view. From there, theorists consider those strategies that are supposed to lead towards that endpoint. There is on the other hand agreement among theorists on the transformative aim and on the fact that the reality more often than not shows a combination of approaches, whereby the different 'visions' can be recognised in policy mixes that combine different strategies.

When however gender mainstreaming is embraced as a multidimensional approach, this presumes a simultaneous consideration of the three 'visions', as different dimensions to be addressed. 'Equal treatment and equal rights', the first dimension is often assumed as a given and acquired. However, in research, it has been proven not yet to be realised. Research (European Commission, 2008) has shown that different norms and standards are applied for male and female researchers in nomination and promotion procedures, and these different norms determine women's and men's chances for climbing the academic ladder, to the disadvantage of women. This makes equal treatment a dimension that still needs consideration and the attribution of resources and efforts to remedy the existing inequity.

'Specific action' in the research context takes form in the studies and dedicated funds that are entirely focussed on understanding and correcting the gender inequities and the mechanisms that produce them. In FP6, these have mainly materialised within the Science and Society part, where specific 'women and science' calls have been launched to fund gender-specific research, and under which the gender monitoring studies have been budgeted. However, also other instruments as for example efforts to compile and collect gender-segregated statistics, gender budgeting, awareness-raising and capacity-building actions are to be seen as specific action.

Finally, gender mainstreaming transformative actions can be regarded as ensuring that the comprehensive collection of all of the above can take place, with the necessary and balanced interventions through adequate and tailored tools and instruments, at all stages of the gender policy making, implementation planning, execution and evaluation stages.

Gender mainstreaming then is seen in this study as a strategy that encompasses the different dimensions and that combines measures, instruments and resources that allow each of the

dimensions to be furthered. In this understanding, and drawing a parallel, gender mainstreaming could be regarded as a battle simultaneously to be fought at three different fronts. I argue that where gender mainstreaming is not conceptualised as a multi-dimensional strategy, its implementation will not yield the results that gender mainstreaming could deliver.

This is based on the view that adequate gender mainstreaming design and its actual implementation follow the comprehensive approach and combine attention for women's rights and equal treatment with specific actions aimed at redressing existing imbalances and general efforts towards a transformed practice and a new equal reality. In this understanding, a 'good' gender mainstreaming implementation departs from a comprehensive, multi-dimensionally designed plan and continues this plan also in a comprehensive and multi-dimensional way, whereby the different dimensions are each addressed in a balanced and adequate manner. Where this is not the case, where the focus for example narrows to the consideration of one dimension, uneven implementation occurs that will not succeed in delivering the expected results and the potential that is theoretically held by gender mainstreaming.

As my work has shown, it is worth distinguishing between conceptualisations in the planned implementation strategy and in the actual implementation in terms of how it takes place in practice, which issues it faces, which difficulties need to be overcome, what the elements are that support progress and how this all affects the outcomes of the strategy. Thus, theoretical 'visions' of gender equality strategies are to be analytically distinguished from how these strategies take form: at the planning stage and at the actual implementation stage. Following this reasoning, it is useful to verify how the concept of gender equality is considered at the implementation level and to verify which 'dimensions' have been addressed.

The case that has been analysed in this work has shown that the design of the gender mainstreaming strategy (its plan) has indeed been multi-dimensional from the offset under FP5 as well as in the design of FP6, with attention for and efforts towards increasing women's participation, research on the gender issue itself and efforts to make research more gender-sensitive. The implementation however evolved in a shallower and narrower way as the attention, resources and commitment for gender mainstreaming not only appeared to dilute over time but also shrunk to a nearly exclusive focus on women's participation. In short, towards the end of FP6 and at the start of FP7 what was left of the initial plan was significantly shrunk. This shrunk approach continued under FP7 and was even structurally 'fixed' for the next policy implementation cycle, *inter alia* by the abolition of the Gender Action Plans.

What happened can be regarded as an example of 'policy evaporation' (or as another form of the in academic circles commonly known effect of the 'leaking pipeline'): the systematic and gradual reduction of the efforts and a narrowing down of the approach away from a balanced multi-dimensional approach towards a shrunk and diluted approach. Logically, the final outcomes at the end of the cycle did not meet the expected results that could have corresponded with the strategy that, had it been implemented the way it was planned, even though it had shortcomings, would have delivered more progress.

In contrast to the conceptual 'shrinking' of the gender mainstreaming approach in its implementation, which clearly negatively affected the outcomes, it is worth noting at the same time that the apparent 'bending' of gender equality efforts towards the aim of 'excellence in research' does not seem to have affected the outcomes in a negative way – as theorists tend to consider bending practices as negative.

The concepts offered by Lombardo, Meier and Verloo in their theory on the discursive practice of gender equality has in this case proven useful as analytical tool to follow the gender mainstreaming implementation planning and evolvement. However, it must be pointed out that the practices of 'bending', 'shrinking' and 'fixing' were in the reviewed case identified in the approach taken to gender mainstreaming, rather than in the meaning given to the concept of gender equality itself, as the original authors suggested.

While 'bending' has indeed been recognised at the discursive level, the 'shrinking' was identified not merely in discourses but even more importantly also in the initiatives and activities and their outcomes. While it seems that in particular the notions of bending and shrinking as offered by these authors could be recognised, the RTD framework programmes also 'fix' approaches to gender mainstreaming in their structures as these have legal bases of which the provisions are valid and more or less 'cast in iron' for the time of the FP cycle.

We have looked at the discussions of theorists about the concepts and their interpretation, and the confusion that exists over these being presumed as a cause for disappointing results of gender mainstreaming. However, the present research has shown that these are not a main explanatory factor.

The tendency towards a focus on women's participation, and away from the gender dimension of the research itself, has also in some literature on FP6 (for example the overall synthesis report of the gender monitoring studies) been attributed to an unclarity and confusion over the concept of 'gender in the research content'. Still, I argue that it is not just conceptual unclarity: there is a lack of comprehension about the mechanisms that structurally re-iterate inequalities. Furthermore, rather than confusion and ambiguity over concepts, I argue that incapacity on the part of the actors is a stronger explanatory factor for inadequate (or lack of) performance. Still, there has existed confusion and ambiguity over the intentions of the institution as regards gender mainstreaming for achieving gender equality. As the actual commitment (that can be interpreted from proposal evaluations, contract negotiations, project officers' monitoring and supervising of projects) does not seem to match the rhetorical commitment towards gender equality, the signals that the EC sends out are ambiguous. When not all actors are duly equipped to take up their tasks, when the approach to gender mainstreaming shrinks in the process, and when from one policy cycle to the next (from FP6 to FP7) the 'shrunk' approach – whereby the consideration of gender issues is 'optional' for the applicants' – is fixed for the full next term in a legal base, the sincerity of the EC's commitment to gender equality can rightfully be questioned. As long as there is no comprehensive and consistent strategy, both within and across policy cycles, the message that is given is not one of clear and firm commitment.

It can therefore be concluded that the actors involved in the gender mainstreaming implementation work are very sensitive to the institutional commitment to gender equality. When this institutional commitment is not convincing (when rhetorics do not seem to match the reality in terms of available resources, incentives or sanctions, consistent attention), this will lower actors' motivation to perform adequately, as actors seek to prioritise their work according to perceived expectations on the part of their employer or funding authority.

8.3. Conditions for effective gender mainstreaming

As observed in Chapter two, conditions for effective gender mainstreaming put forward by theorists do not distinguish between the different stages in the policy process: the policy-making (where the political decision is taken to adopt gender mainstreaming as a strategy and up to the 'fixing' of the provisions for it in a legal base), the planning of the gender mainstreaming implementation, and then the actual implementation. This is important to note because the case under review has taken a closer look at gender mainstreaming implementation: its planning and how actual implementation has diverged from the planning.

Neither do the conditions suggested in theories consider the bridging from the policy making scene to the world beyond it, and what this means for the conditions. Are these 'mutatis mutandis' equally applicable? How does this bridging happen and what are the effects of attempts to push gender mainstreaming, a concept designed for the policy-making context, into the field to be implemented by a wider public outside public administrations? The case reviewed clearly shows that it is already a challenging task to duly equip all actors at the policy level for gender mainstreaming, to ensure they are aware and capable to deliver what is expected from them. This finding calls for extra attention when a 'bridging' attempt is undertaken, for the fact that the difficulties encountered by gender mainstreaming are multiplied when the number of actors to be reached, convinced and equipped with the necessary resources and capacities is a multiple of the original number found within the circle of civil servants in charge.

The gender mainstreaming implementation plan under FP6 has been quite comprehensive and appeared as promising: for various actors there were structural provisions foreseen and a new instrument, the Gender Action Plan (GAP), was introduced. The gender monitoring studies would allow to follow up on the progress and would help to identify impediments so that improvements could be made along the way. And indeed, at the start and during about the first half of the FP6 cycle, the gender monitoring work did show that the efforts yielded results, although some shortcomings could be identified. However, as it turned out, as FP6 progressed, the efforts and the results of gender mainstreaming watered down. The quality of the GAP nor the extent to which project proposals duly considered gender issues were criteria to be marked during the evaluation stage; there were proposals that got approved for funding while they did not contain the 'mandatory' Gender Action Plan; the implementation of the GAP was not as closely monitored by the EC administrators in charge of projects as the administrative and scientific work; the technical system for project reporting on GAP implementation did

not work properly and these problems were not adequately solved. In short, it became rather quickly clear for the research community that what at first appeared as new requirements were not at all so crucial for obtaining EU project funding. When, on top of this all, it became known that during the preparations for FP7 the abolition of the GAPs was considered, the Commission appeared to send out the signal as if it were not so serious after all about gender equality in research, a message that was confirmed by the effective decision to discontinue the GAPs. Rather than improving the instrument, because there was no doubt that the tool had some flaws (being an add-on to the proposal, a final section of it, that did not relate to the different project constituents like inputs, research techniques, outputs, etc.) and could indeed be improved, the Commission gave in to 'pressures' and eliminated the GAP altogether. The pressures and reasons explaining the decision which were alluded to were letters from high standing research institutions and from the high-level expert panel, the Marinom panel, that had assessed the new instruments. However, no formal evidence of substantive criticism to the GAPs could be found – except among managerial staff within the DG RTD itself.

Looking at the conditions set out in Chapter 2, the case under review confirms that tackling gender mainstreaming as a staged approach indeed yields positive effects. Especially the phases of undertaking a diagnosis of the existing situation (analysis phase), and then developing the gender mainstreaming plan in which the actions and instruments are defined, are important. It is worthwhile to remember that the staged approach as considered in the theory only refers to the gender mainstreaming policy making stage and the initial planning of implementation, not to the actual implementation. It will be clear now that in the absence of a coherent approach whereby all stages are duly considered, a promising policy definition in terms of transformative potential ('agenda setting') does not automatically lead to effective gender mainstreaming implementation and positive results.

Furthermore, the planning of the implementation in the theory has not been discussed in detail, and this is what I have considered in this work by scrutinising how well each of the actors were equipped – an analysis that has brought to the surface an uneven set of provisions and measures for the various actors, and overall insufficient resources (notably in terms of capacity of the actors, but also as regards properly functioning information systems and time for the project officers) being provided.

With the launching of the gender toolkit and training activities in FP7, the EC aimed to respond to the existing need for awareness-raising and capacity-building, which were two needs not addressed under FP6. However, as no further complementary structural provisions were put in place anymore in FP7, the research community reacts with confusion on what is now truly expected from them in terms of gender in their research projects (Mergaert, 2010). Furthermore, as the toolkit and training activities mainly target the researchers, the internal lack of awareness and the capacity problem among the project officers, as well as among the other actors in FP structures, remains unaddressed. This problem seriously limits the potential for improving gender equality in EU-funded science and research. This is especially

true as long as the gender blindness and gender biases in the setting of the research agenda (the definition of the work programmes and research topics that are eligible for funding) are not questioned. This representation of what is 'the problem that should be solved' as external to its own structures, suggests reluctance on the part of the EC to recognise that internal elements have been (at least in part) also responsible for disappointing gender mainstreaming results. Moreover, as the research has shown that the persistent internal problems (notably the defective information systems, but also the adverse effects of the high level of staff mobility within the DG Research) that impeded the effective implementation of gender mainstreaming have not been addressed or solved by the European Commission in the process of FP6, this indicates unwillingness of the organisation to address its own processes and structures and casts doubts about the truthfulness of its commitment to gender equality. In summary, the case study has confirmed the importance of the organisation's (un-)willingness to question and to effectively address the deeply rooted structures of power, values and frames that exist within the institution itself.

Consultation with and involvement of civil society during the policy process has in the case that was studied hardly been noticed. Yet, back in the nineties the support from women academics had been instrumental to enable the uptake of gender mainstreaming in a policy domain that had been closed for gender equality considerations before. Also had the Commission under FP6 launched a call for proposals with the aim to set up, with EU funds from FP6, a so-called European Platform of Women Scientists (EPWS). This Platform, as 'network of networks' of women academics was indeed created to 'represent the needs, concerns, interests, and aspirations of women scientists in Europe, in all disciplines, and at all stages of their career path', as says its website.⁹⁶ It is to be noted that its objectives do not refer to the gender dimension of the research itself. The EPWS did not succeed in ensuring its own financing to become and stay self-sustainable, as was the purpose from the beginning. The Commission made additional money available for it under FP7 once, but since the end of 2009 the EPWS is continuing its activities without staff and secretariat in Brussels. While the potential of the EPWS as lobby and advocacy body can rightly be questioned when its funding is provided by the very institution and even Directorate-general which it is supposed to be critical of, the potential has in any case been reduced drastically by the ceasing of the financing. Anyhow, the EPWS has never succeeded in manifesting itself as strong lobbyist, its efforts and resources seemingly having been more geared towards its networking activities. Also, in its approach, it focuses mainly on the career opportunities for female academics, a rather narrow view considering the multi-dimensional character of the gender in research concept. As such, the Platform, nor other civil society groups (like for example the European Women's Lobby, AOIFE⁹⁷ or

⁹⁶ www.epws.org

⁹⁷ AOIFE was a grouping of women's studies representatives from European higher education institutions. AOIFE was at the basis of the creation of the ATHENA network (a thematic network on gender studies funded by the EC under the Socrates programme).

the WISE⁹⁸ network⁹⁹) seem to have been significantly consulted or involved in the process. Two exceptions can be considered: 1) the gender monitoring study contractors of which some were consultants with gender expertise, others were academics, and 2) the Helsinki Group on Women and Science, consisting of representatives of the Member States who advise the EC on women and science issues. The gender monitoring study contractors convened once a year during the implementation of their three-year contracts to discuss the status of their work and their findings. However, despite the fact that they were consulted and despite the yearly reports they produced, they have not had significant impacts on the process. What has been taken into account seems to have gone through a filter, by which some arguments were used to justify decisions which were not at all supported by the contractors. For example, where it is true that the contractors pointed out that the GAPs did not work as planned, they did not support their discontinuation. While the contractors, through their work, offered the opportunity for fine-tuning, adjusting and correcting along the way, this opportunity was not exploited by the Commission. Had it been, the results of the FP6 gender mainstreaming implementation would undoubtedly have been better, which confirms the validity of the condition. While the Helsinki Group had been informed about the launch of the gender monitoring studies, only once did they receive partial results of their (preliminary) findings in the course of FP6. Furthermore, the research has shown that explicit criticism on the part of the Helsinki Group about how the EC approached gender equality was ignored. Lastly, it is worth remembering that a planned conference in which the results of the gender monitoring studies would be made public has never taken place. Based on all these elements, it can be concluded that whereas opportunities for involvement of civil society actors and gender experts had been foreseen and whereas there have been a number of occasions on which experts provided input to the Commission, the EC has actively minimised the opportunities for the involvement of experts and ignored their inputs. This finding points to unwillingness of the institution to accept non-hegemonic voices to influence its course of action where its gender equality policy is concerned.

Accountability as a condition for effective gender mainstreaming is a requirement that applies at the different stages: for the policy-making when the formal, structural provisions and overall resources are decided, and also for the implementation planning and actual implementation. Beyond confirming the validity of this requirement, the case of FP6 has shown that the institutional features of the European Commission do not allow to hold people responsible for gender mainstreaming implementation, nor for its results. This is mainly due to the high internal turnover of personnel. Indeed, once results of programmes or policy directions are assessed – usually when an ex-post evaluation study is commissioned – the responsible staff is (long) gone. Due to excessive and not procedurally organised agent mobility (there is no proper hand-over of responsibilities and tasks), neither can *knowledge* stay in place and be built up, negatively affecting the organisation's capacity for learning - a situation that is worsened by

⁹⁸ Women's International Studies Europe (WISE) - <http://www.wise.medinstgenderstudies.org/index.html>

⁹⁹ WISE, AOIFE and ATHENA3 merged in September 2009 to form the professional association ATGENDER

persistently failing internal information systems. It is not surprising then that this situation is not favourable for staff to feel any 'ownership' over the gender mainstreaming project within the Commission. In summary, the institutional context clearly does not allow for effective accountability. This translates also to the researchers involved in proposals and projects: when they experience that their performance towards gender equality in their work is not evaluated or monitored and that they are not held accountable for it (for whatever reasons), they will soon enough divert their efforts towards actions which they know they will be assessed on.

The case has shown the clear interlinkage between the lack of success of gender mainstreaming in FP6 and the unfulfillment of the key conditions for gender mainstreaming that were proposed in Chapter 2. An understanding of the institutional processes and features of the Commission (an organisation where the highest hierarchical levels are very male dominated and of which the cultural values are traditionally male-oriented) has helped explain the mechanisms that have been at work and which have led to policy outcomes that have remained below expectations. The interplay between these two realities of gender mainstreaming effectiveness and the organisational aspects does not seem to be recognised though, as at no point this has arisen as an important factor to be considered and addressed.

As there are reasons to doubt whether the institutional commitment to mainstream gender in research is real rather than just rhetorical, the question can be asked about the organisation's willingness to ensure that the key conditions for effective gender mainstreaming are fulfilled. Indeed, notably the unwillingness of the DG Research to question its own gendered structures, as well as its resistance to let non-hegemonic voices influence its course of action may raise suspicion in this respect.

8.4. Resistance

I have argued that rather than resistance to gender equality as such, other explanatory factors are at least worth considering for the gender mainstreaming results remaining below expectations. These are notably incapacity and the lack of resources (in terms of time and in terms of adequate tools or instruments) on the part of individuals in charge of implementation tasks. However, while it seems that resistance is not directly attributable to the actors who are supposed to implement gender mainstreaming (albeit that exceptions can be found), this is not so evident for the highest hierarchical levels. This is where the decisions are to be taken about structural provisions, for planning and implementation, where resources are attributed and where shifts from original plans are decided. As we have made clear that none of the key conditions for effective gender mainstreaming were fulfilled (see section 8.3. above) and as we could find examples of active and deliberate resistance to gender equality efforts at different levels of the organisation including the highest (see section 7.4.), this level requires specific scrutiny. Such scrutiny appears however utterly difficult: resistance is hardly traceable to specific loci at this level. This observation is related to the lack of transparency in the decision-making cycle, a feature which seems inherent to a liquid bureaucracy (as discussed in section

8.1). The organisation proves to be really closed when attempts are made to understand or to disclose any signs, or even clear manifestations, of moves away from gender mainstreaming goals. Even informally, only vague allusions are made to pockets of resistance within the Commission, but no names are ever mentioned. Nevertheless, considering all findings, it can reasonably be concluded that explicit institutional resistance to gender equality in the DG Research does indeed exist. Indeed, the research has made clear that not only may there be doubts about the institutional commitment to gender mainstreaming in the research domain (as not all actors were adequately equipped to take on their role, as no sufficient resources were foreseen, as no accountability structures were in place and as non-action went unsanctioned), incapacity on the part of the actors has not been the exception but was common, institutional barriers to effective gender mainstreaming (like the absence of gender considerations in the assessment of proposals for funding, failing information systems and lack of gender awareness among EC staff) were not removed and non-hegemonic voices were not allowed to influence the policy process (protests from the Helsinki Group of Women and Science against the EC's plans for FP7 were ignored, as were specific recommendations made by the gender monitoring studies not to abandon the Gender Action Plans).

We must at the same time remember that the institutional processes and principles, notably the structurally embedded staff mobility, do not foster specialist subject matter knowledge development and that on the way to the top of the organisation such knowledge seems to be sifted out and replaced by 'institutional expertise' (expert knowledge of the institutional processes, principles and functioning). In this light, it is no surprise that decisions taken at the top favour institutional preservation over change. Considering then that, as we have seen, the people in power positions in the EC determine to a large extent the attitudes towards and support for gender change (or lack thereof) in their departments, resistance to gender change manifested at the top has a paralysing effect on the underlying organisational levels, which contributes to the *implicit* institutional resistance effect.

Implicit institutional resistance can be considered together with the important effects that institutional non-action has (which may be labelled as 'the power of inertia') because they constitute interferences in the policy-making itself by the very deed of 'non-implementation'. This reasoning follows Longwe's argument that negation of a policy becomes policy intervention and as such a re-making of policy (Longwe, 1995, 1997). Consequently, if non-implementation of policy decisions on the part of the Commission were recognised more generally, such 'correction' of policy decisions through non-implementation could be interpreted as a violation of its mandate of being the 'proposer' and the 'executive' of political and legislative decisions. The Commission's closedness to civil society (or external experts') involvement in the process of the framework programme implementation, as well as the absence of accountability structures can be explained by resistance. However, rather than resistance to the principle of 'gender equality', it is not unlikely that the resistance that is noticeable on the part of the highest hierarchical levels in the organisation is to transparency and accountability as such, in

attempts to preserve their own power. Such explanation of this institutional behaviour would fit with the legacy of the EC, which historically is responsible both for policy preparation and implementation. In such situation, where implementation fails (in our example, this would be mainly gender mainstreaming implementation as regards enhancing the gender-sensitiveness of the funded research), the institution can 'solve' this problem of what did not function by trying to hide away these failures (recognisable in the non-publication of various gender monitoring study reports and in the fact that the attention of the external experts' panel in charge of the evaluation of FP6 was not drawn to the specific objective of promoting the gender dimension of the research itself) and by subsequently leaving the issue out in the next policy cycle. This finding would suggest that the Directorate General for Research is not so open anymore to democratic values as it was at the end of the nineties, when gender mainstreaming entered the policy domain.

The occurrence of individual agency is in this light even more interesting. In an administration where progress to gender equality is seemingly structurally and institutionally held back under conditions of liquid compartmentalised bureaucracy, it does happen that individuals take the courage to fight the bureaucracy and position themselves as gender equality advocates. While on the one hand advocacy is not a role expected from civil servants as they are not supposed to let their individual opinions guide their professional acts, gender equality as a principle is enshrined in the Treaty and is as such to be respected and also is gender mainstreaming a strategy that has formally been adopted at the political level. That some duty-conscious civil servants do undertake action is therefore not surprising. Still, for those civil servants active within a 'gender machinery' locus in an administration – like the 'scientific culture and gender issues' unit (formerly the 'women in science' unit in the Commission's Research Directorate-General), their role is at least ambivalent as they are expected to push forward gender equality, both during the implementation cycle and to fight for gender equality at time of strategic (re-)definition and review of policy implementation strategies. As a result, some civil servants clearly put more emphasis on the advocacy responsibility than others who are more inclined to follow the paths set out by the higher hierarchical levels.

The research has also shown that where local attitudes towards gender change are more favourable, there is more space for pushing forward the realisation of agreed upon gender equality initiatives than in loci that are more closed to gender equality issues. We have seen that in the latter, those actors who are courageous enough to take initiatives to support gender equality in science are likely to be held back and demotivated. In the example that we have encountered (see section 7.3.), this has even contributed to the respective officer's decision to leave the Commission, thus indicating a causal relation between the possibility or likeliness of the institution to retain femocrats and the reigning local attitudes towards gender as a policy goal. Indeed, where such attitudes are unfavourable, there is less space and opportunity for these actors to make a difference, which may result in them seeking other working environments.

8.5. The institutional features and the local attitudes towards gender change

The research has confirmed earlier suggestions from scholars about the institutional features of the EC and how these relate to its gender mainstreaming performance. A first important finding is that the EC as an organisation is marked by a compartmentalised structure in which heterogeneous value sets can reign, and management principles that impede the development of specialist knowledge. Second, these features form important obstacles for effective gender mainstreaming.

But let us look more closely at the study findings. I have described the European Commission as a 'liquid, compartmentalised bureaucracy'. The concept of the 'liquid bureaucracy' herein has been borrowed from Verloo and Roggeband, who however have not provided a definition for this concept. I propose to define a liquid bureaucracy as an administration that is marked by a very high level of staff mobility, while there are no adequate institutional measures in place to compensate for the disadvantages of this mobility, notably in terms of accountability, hand-over of responsibilities, 'ownership' over results, the institutional learning capacity and the institutional memory. As a result, in a 'liquid bureaucracy', shared memory and continuity of actors are missing, which negatively affects the organisation's learning capacity, and which makes for ever-changing opportunity structures - observations that are in line with what Verloo and Roggeband have suggested. I consider this description fits the European Commission's DG Research in the period under study. As the case study has shown convincingly (Chapter 7 gives a clear account of these mechanisms), there is a very high level of (formally encouraged) staff mobility within the administration, but no adequate provisions for ensuring a smooth take-over of functions and responsibilities by others. Information systems cannot compensate for human-based knowledge not staying in place, which further impedes the building up of knowledge. This situation not only prevents institutional learning but also renders it almost impossible to hold individuals responsible for policy outcomes. Indeed, initiatives that are started up by certain officials have to be taken over by others in the process, more often than not without proper hand-over. This practice furthermore causes a generalised lack of ownership over work. Liquidity is structurally embedded in the organisation not only by formally encouraged staff mobility, but also by the generally accepted practice of restructurations that follow the appointment of new Directors-General (not only in the DG RTD, but throughout the EC). While institutions usually are regarded as 'stable', it can in our case – somewhat paradoxically - be concluded that the European Commission is stable in its liquidity. As a result of this stable liquidity and the impossibility to develop specialist knowledge, officials working in the organisation cannot find pride in subject matter expertise. Rather, they are encouraged to develop the skill to adapt quickly to new situations, responsibilities and tasks, new subject matters, changing local cultures and management styles depending on superiors. The expertise which does prove useful to develop is knowledge of institutional processes, procedures and practices. In this light, it may be easier to understand the resistance against any attempts to change institutional elements, especially amongst those at the highest hierarchical levels, as these are exactly the issues those people are strong at.

Considering the above, it is evident that an institution with these features cannot deliver even and effective gender mainstreaming. There is even reason to believe that this finding may have a wider validity and that the EC's capacity to deliver any work that requires content matter expertise is seriously hampered by its own institutional characteristics and embedded norms.

The concept of the 'liquid bureaucracy' has proven to be useful in this case as it helps to understand what has happened in the institution in the period under review. However, at the same time, it may be criticised as limited in value as it does not really explain *why* the things have happened the way they did and not differently – as (of yet) the concept is not embedded in theory. Still, on the basis of the case analysed, it is possible to offer some theoretical propositions about how liquidity has impacted on what happened in the administration.

First of all, the case has shown that liquidity renders a bureaucracy less accountable than what a stable bureaucracy can offer in terms of accountability conditions. Indeed, as people come and go in different departments, they take knowledge and expertise with them, supporting the building of an organisation that is staffed by generalists rather than by specialists in the different fields for which the EC is competent. Furthermore, in the absence of proper hand-over provisions, a feeling of lack of ownership over initiatives and projects among the civil servants becomes the rule rather than the exception – all resulting in the impossibility to hold the people in function responsible for what happened before them. This can be illustrated with what happened to the different gender monitoring studies (as described in Chapter 7), where the frequent change in 'liaison persons' within the EC who were to provide the contractors with data, resulted in situations where not only at certain times there was nobody in charge of collecting the data within the organisation, also did some data appear to have gotten lost while seemingly nobody could be held responsible. This led to delays in and complications for the implementation of the gender monitoring work.

Second, the conditions of a liquid bureaucracy are such that different attitudes towards gender equality as a policy goal can co-exist within the organisation and that local attitudes towards gender change in different departments of the organisation can change rapidly with the going and coming of different people in responsible positions, and this makes for windows of opportunity that open and close very quickly. As a consequence, it is very difficult for civil society organisations (CSO) to spot and make use of windows of opportunity in time, whereas in stable bureaucracies such windows of opportunity where they occur allow for more reaction time for CSOs to make use of them. This condition of very quickly changing situations of opportunity to intervene and influence the policy cycle underlines the crucial importance of individual actors inside liquid bureaucracies. Such individual actors can make the difference by pushing forward or holding back progress in terms of gender equality as well as in terms of signalling opportunities to CSOs. In the case of the DG RTD, we have seen that the different Heads of Unit that have been in charge of the unit hosting the responsibility for gender equality in science have distinctly marked the unit's approach to gender issues: from actively pushing forward gender equality to a much more passive role.

Thirdly, in a liquid bureaucracy, the different stages of the policy-making cycle appear less sharply delineated than in a stable bureaucracy as the responsibilities of the different actors are not so clearly defined and as individuals in responsible positions do not stay in function for periods long enough to ensure a stability of policy direction. In the case of the EU's RTD Framework Programmes, for example, we have seen that from FP6 to FP7 the policy approach to gender equality was shrunk: women's participation became the main focus while the emphasis on 'gender-sensitive research' was dropped, together with the specific tool that existed under FP6, the Gender Action Plan. Still, it appeared impossible to detect at which point exactly in the preparation process for FP7 and by whom these decisions were taken, upon consideration of which (or whose) arguments. The process leading to this decision has not been transparent and is not adequately documented. As described in Chapter 7, only vague references were made by the EC to the lack of understanding by the actors about what was expected from them in terms of gender and to complaints about gender-related requirements being 'burdensome' for the researchers. The complaints, if they existed, were probably only informal, as there was no trace of them in the formal public documents.

As has been demonstrated, the local attitudes towards gender change that reign within units or departments in the European Commission are very much determined by the individuals that have a position of power in that locus. Where these individuals are open to gender equality considerations, the local attitudes are likely to be more favourable to gender issues, and space can be created for initiatives. However, staff turnover is high, and such individuals might suddenly be gone, and the local attitudes towards gender change are in such situation likely to change, almost literally, overnight. In this light, it becomes evident that undertaking gender mainstreaming is at the very least a clear challenge. The findings of this work suggest that progress for gender equality in the EC depends to a large extent on a combination of favourable institutional conditions (notably favourable local attitudes towards gender equality as a policy goal) and individual actors (or 'individual agency'), who can make use of the windows of opportunity that arise - if only they can rely on a certain level of empowerment and have a feeling of ownership over the gender equality goal and plan.

Due to the highly liquid nature of the EC as an organisation, the approaches taken by it towards different initiatives or goals (in this case gender equality) may change quickly and drastically. In such context, the 'fixing' of provisions in firm commitments that are formally adopted, especially when in the form of legal texts, offers a more stable ground that is less likely to be swept away. Of course, as the research has shown, 'fixing' also holds disadvantages when the approach that is 'fixed' is not as comprehensive or complete as gender experts and advocates would want. The provisions and measures for advancing gender equality were quite comprehensive under FP6, and even while their implementation weakened as FP6 advanced, they could not be ignored or eliminated altogether because they were fixed in the legal base of FP6, a European Parliament and Council Decision (European Parliament and Council of the European Union, 2002). In

FP7 then, we are faced with a shrunk policy approach to gender equality, which again is fixed in FP7's legal base, leaving little space for gender activists and femocrats to rectify or improve upon this situation for the whole duration of this Framework Programme's implementation period. Only when the next cycle is prepared (FP8), new opportunities for strengthening the EC's formal strategy towards gender equality in science arise.

The above confirms the validity of the claim made by feminist institutionalist scholars who call for attention for the important link between the institutional features and the potential and outcomes of their gender equality undertakings. The present research and its findings have made a contribution to this new branch of feminist theory in various ways. It has provided a sharper insight in the interplay between individual actors and the institution, as well as in the (bounded) opportunities of strategic agency, notably in the light of formal and informal values as defined by the institution and by the locally reigning attitudes towards gender equality as a policy goal. Indeed, I have shown with this research that both formal institutional values (notably a concern for preserving civil servants' integrity by ensuring staff mobility) as well as informal values (strongly influenced by local managers, who have a large degree of discretion in this respect) determine the opportunities for individuals in the organisation to act upon gender equality. It is important to note also that the research has demonstrated the relevance of institutional aspects (for example IT infrastructures not compensating for human knowledge – in our case gender expertise - not staying in place due to the high level of staff mobility) beyond those that directly relate to women's position, power dynamics and the internal reproduction of gender inequality within the organisation, as these are what feminist institutionalists tend to focus on (Mackay, Krook, Kenny, Chappell, & Waylen, 2010). Lastly, the research has also contributed to feminist theory by unveiling the precise mechanisms through which institutional features and processes have impacted upon the gender mainstreaming implementation by the European Commission's DG Research. Indeed, while in feminist theory the relevance of studying the links between institutional features and the policy performance of these institutions is emphasised, it remains largely unaddressed how these interrelations precisely function, and which are the mechanisms and causal relations through which institutional features impact upon institutional performance.

With the European Commission as the case studied, the research findings can also feed into the 'comparative politics of gender and institutions', argued for by Louise Chappell (Chappell, 2006, 2010), as the detailed account of the European Commission's case has a high potential relevance for comparisons with other international as well as national administrations.

8.6. The way forward

In this final section, I propose what I think are the most important messages to remember from this work for those who would like to maximise the effects of their gender mainstreaming undertakings.

As the research has shown, it is important to clearly define the gender equality goal in policy-relevant and concrete terms. This favours the understanding of the actors who need to take up responsibilities of what exactly is to be pursued.

The policy mix for effectively implementing gender mainstreaming needs to ensure that all actors are capable and equipped to take up their tasks. This requires, at the implementation planning stage, a careful consideration of all the actors that are expected to contribute to the implementation, while fulfilling their daily and regular roles and tasks: are they sufficiently aware, what tools and instruments are needed by each individual actor, are the resources in place for each of them, how can and will the institution monitor the implementation, which feedback loops will be foreseen so that the process can be improved, how will evaluation be organised? When the system is not complete or not coherent, when one or more actors find themselves incapable of taking up (or are even ignorant about) their gender-related responsibilities, the gender mainstreaming implementation will not yield the expected results. An incomplete policy mix could be regarded as a system with 'holes' in it through which the potential of gender mainstreaming evaporates – or as another form of a leaking pipeline.

But even then, when the policy mix is complete, gender mainstreaming implementation is faced with interferences which may seriously affect it. The institutional context determines to a large extent its potential. First, there are the deeply rooted institutional values and norms as they relate to gender, which are not visible and constitute the informal layer in the organisational culture as pointed out by Díaz González. We must be wary of strategies that focus exclusively on the visible aspects of organisational culture and structures (institutions working on the elimination of barriers for women to make progress, allowing better work-life balances for their staff) while leaving the masculine and hetero-normative norms and values that keep reproducing gender inequities unchallenged. As we have seen, also other policies, like the human resources policy (for example when it relies on staff mobility) or infrastructures policy (thinking of information systems), may counter effective gender mainstreaming. Hence, these dimensions should be addressed from the outset together with the start of the gender mainstreaming planning. I argue that ideally both undertakings go hand in hand, whereby the review and redressing of the own organisation forms an integral part of the overall gender mainstreaming strategy.

Furthermore, considering the multiplication of the challenges and requirements that are involved when gender mainstreaming efforts aim to bridge the policy scene and the 'real world', it may be commendable and more effective to first tackle gender issues inside the own organisation and only in a next stage address a broader audience.

Apparent manifestations of 'resistance' that can be observed in the process of gender mainstreaming implementation deserve close attention. These are not necessarily signs of hostility against gender equality itself, but may result from other problems which can be addressed once identified.

Accountability structures and hard incentives are key drivers for actors to perform according to the expectations and towards the realisation of the gender equality goal. Moreover, they contribute to rendering the process more transparent. Transparency and openness for the involvement of expertise and non-hegemonic voices help to ensure that the process is kept on track and that remediating actions are taken where necessary.

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Summary

Gender, gender equality and gender mainstreaming are concepts from feminist theory that have been embraced at the policy making level as offering an alternative for the problematized existing situation of inequality between the sexes.

Feminist political science scholars strongly believed in the potential of gender mainstreaming to bring about gender change. Yet, they cannot explain why gender mainstreaming has not yielded the expected results. This poses a problem. Scholars agree there must be problems with the implementation of the strategy, but at the same time gender mainstreaming implementation remains largely understudied. As a consequence, many have embarked into speculations about possible causes for variable outcomes of gender mainstreaming. However, these theories are very fragmented, unstructured, and based on rather loose empirical grounds. This situation calls for remediation, which the present research aims to contribute to.

While the existing theories ignore the fact that there are stages in the process of gender mainstreaming, I argue that it is necessary to distinguish between the policy-making (i.e. the political decision-making process, up to the formal adoption of gender mainstreaming as a strategy) and the implementation stage, and within implementation between the planning of the implementation strategy and the actual implementation in terms of how it takes place in practice.

The case study focuses on gender mainstreaming in the EU research policy, a policy field that has been engaged with gender mainstreaming implementation for a considerable number of years, and thus offers the opportunity of comparison over time. Since the coordination and funding of European research activities is organized in so-called 'framework programmes' that run over several years and which have a cyclic character, the study of gender mainstreaming implementation in the research domain allows to distinguish planning and implementation as different phases of the policy cycle.

In the existing literature about gender mainstreaming by the European Commission, variability is recognised in the understanding of the underlying goal of gender mainstreaming, in the uptake of the strategy, in the approach to it and in the adopted practices, translating in variability of the effectiveness of the strategy and thus in unevenness of gender mainstreaming results. Key notions for the analysis of the case are therefore 'variability' and 'unevenness' in uptake, practices and results, because these in turn determine the 'effectiveness' of the strategy. My case analysis therefore systematically pinpoints variability and unevenness where they occur. Only then I can proceed by unveiling the mechanisms that have been at work and by identifying how the results have been affected.

A new school of thinking about institutions and how they deliver gender equality policies, namely feminist institutionalism, appears promising and deserves more attention. These scholars aim to investigate how institutional aspects relate to the potential and outcomes of

the gender equality endeavours of these very institutions (Chappell, 2006, 2010; Mackay & Meier, 2003; Mackay & Waylen, 2009; Wieringa, 1994). While this young strand of thinking cannot yet lean on a substantive body of literature, the theorists that adhere to it recognise that there are significant pieces of knowledge in existing works of feminist scholars (who do not necessarily categorise themselves as feminist institutionalists) that can support feminist institutionalist theory. For this reason, I have selected from existing scholarly works the most promising elements, looking respectively at what has been written about (potentially problematic) conceptualisations of gender mainstreaming and gender equality, about conditions for effective gender mainstreaming and about resistances.

First, however, I have reviewed existing discussions about the European Commission, how its features may affect its gender mainstreaming endeavours and what the role of agency can be within this setting. Based upon this theoretical analysis, I have established that academic literature about the European Commission indeed contains suggestions that its institutional features influence its performance in terms of gender equality policy implementation. Notably its general weakness in policy implementation, absence of specialist knowledge, absence of hard incentives, compartmentalisation of power and heterogeneity among leaders are pointed out as undermining the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming. Based upon the review of the literature, it appears that the institutional nature of the European Commission can be characterised as a liquid, compartmentalised bureaucracy in which different attitudes towards gender change can co-exist next to each other. The research questions that follow from this conclusion are then whether the case indeed confirms this characterisation and if so, following the feminist institutionalist approach, to what extent these institutional features have impacted upon the gender mainstreaming implementation and what the role of individuals is or can be within such setting. In answer to the first question, the present work has confirmed that the DG Research indeed matches this description. The findings in relation to the second question become apparent through considering the other issues studied.

The analysis approach for the case material centres on the conceptualisation of the goals of gender equality, the extent to which the key conditions for effective gender mainstreaming have been fulfilled, whether and how resistance has affected the implementation and results of the gender mainstreaming implementation and, last but not least, how institutional elements have affected the gender mainstreaming implementation process.

The case under review focuses within the European Commission's Sixth Framework Programme for Research and Development (FP6) on the scientific parts covering the Social Sciences and Humanities as well as the so-called 'Science in Society' field. These parts have been analysed in depth. The research has been primarily based on desk analysis of all relevant data, reports and documents concerning FP6 in general and the research areas relevant for this particular research. This included the work programmes; guides for proposers and evaluators; the call texts; all evaluation reports and independent observer reports; evaluation summary reports of all proposals submitted and evaluated above all thresholds as well as of those gender-specific

proposals that were rejected; for a stratified sample of financed projects the proposals and technical annexes to the contracts; activity and other project reports. In addition, through her involvement in many assignments for the European Commission's DG Research (before, during and after FP6), the author has had frequent contacts, meetings and exchanges with DG RTD staff and other experts working for the EC. This has allowed an on-going process of participatory observation which yielded important insights for the study. A few interviews have complemented these observations. This combination of methodological approaches (document analysis and participatory observation mainly) offered the possibility to draw more comprehensive conclusions.

The analysis looks respectively at the structures that were put in place within the Framework Programme to support gender mainstreaming, or in other words the 'planning' of the implementation and possible shortcomings in it (Chapter 3); at the extent to which the dual goal was realised: increasing women's participation (Chapter 4) and rendering the research work itself gender-sensitive (Chapter 5). The Gender Action Plan, as an instrument specifically developed to enable the integration of gender issues in research work under FP6 is critically examined in Chapter 6. A last empirical chapter (Chapter 7) looks into the institutional context and how this evolved, which helps to explain gender mainstreaming outcomes notably in the light of the institutional features.

Turning now to what gender scholars have suggested, there is first the issue of how the goal of gender mainstreaming is conceptualised. Indeed, when the goal is not clearly conceptualised in the policy definition stage, it can be expected that this will lead to problems during implementation. I therefore checked whether a policy-specific goal of gender equality was pursued by the gender mainstreaming strategy had been defined, whether this goal was clearly communicated towards all the actors that would be involved in the implementation stage in order for them to know what they were expected to work towards, and not unimportantly whether the goal was also understood by the respective actors. Furthermore, I analysed how the implementation of gender mainstreaming contributed to the realisation of the policy goal, how this evolved in the process, what the influence of institutional elements was on such involvement and what the effects were on the outcomes of gender mainstreaming. Then, on a more theoretical level, I also assessed how the policy goal as it has been put forward in my case relates to the theories that address the different strategies towards gender equality. Furthermore, as theorists put forward 'agenda-setting' policy definition as holding most potential for transformative outcomes, I verified to what extent the policy definition in my case can be considered as agenda-setting and establish what this meant for the outcomes.

The case that has been analysed in this work has shown that the design of the gender mainstreaming strategy (its plan) has indeed been multi-dimensional from the offset under FP5 as well as in the design of FP6, with attention for and efforts towards increasing women's participation, research on the gender issue itself and efforts to make research more gender-sensitive. The implementation however evolved in a shallower and narrower way

as the attention, resources and commitment for gender mainstreaming not only appeared to dilute over time but also shrunk to a nearly exclusive focus on women's participation. In short, towards the end of FP6 and at the start of FP7 what was left of the initial plan was significantly shrunk. This shrunk approach continued under FP7 and was even structurally 'fixed' for the next policy implementation cycle, inter alia by the abolition of the Gender Action Plans. Logically, the final outcomes at the end of the cycle did not meet the expected results that could have corresponded with the strategy that, had it been implemented the way it was planned, even though it had shortcomings, would have delivered more progress. Although the gender equality goal can be considered as quite agenda-setting, the outcome has not been transformative, due to the shortcomings in the implementation. The work has shown that the actors involved in the gender mainstreaming implementation work are very sensitive to the institutional commitment to gender equality. When this institutional commitment is not convincing (when rhetorics do not seem to match the reality in terms of available resources, incentives or sanctions, consistent attention), this lowers actors' motivation to perform adequately, as actors seek to prioritise their work according to perceived expectations on the part of their employer or funding authority.

Second, based upon the existing literature and in light of an institutional approach to explaining shortcoming gender mainstreaming implementation, I have established four conditions for effective mainstreaming. These conditions are:

- The willingness of the institution to question and effectively address its own structures and culture: the deeply rooted structures of power, gender hierarchies, values and frames that exist within it;
- Tackling gender mainstreaming implementation as a staged process, departing from a thorough analysis and questioning of the existing situation, upon which the definition and planning of actions can be based, structural provisions put in place, all actors fully equipped (with tools and resources), which then can be followed by a duly monitored and evaluated implementation;
- Consultation with and involvement of civil society and/or experts during the policy process;
- Accountability structures and systems, or 'hard incentives': holding people responsible for the actions undertaken and their results.

In this research, I examined to what extent the various conditions were fulfilled, how this affected the implementation of gender mainstreaming (if at all), and how the characterisation of the institution as a liquid, compartmentalised bureaucracy can help explain what happened. Considering how the European Commission is conceptualised (above), it can be expected that we will find at least the fourth condition (accountability structures) unfulfilled in this institution.

The research has made clear that the key conditions were not fulfilled: the organisation's willingness to question and to address its own structures and deeply rooted values was missing;

the actors were not adequately equipped; the EC minimised the involvement of experts and displayed an unwillingness to accept non-hegemonic voices to influence its course of action and lastly, accountability structures and systems were missing. Furthermore, the analysis has brought to the light the clear inter-linkage between the lack of success of gender mainstreaming in FP6 and the unfulfillment of the key conditions for gender mainstreaming that were reviewed. An understanding of the institutional processes and features of the Commission (an organisation where the highest hierarchical levels are very male dominated and of which the cultural values are traditionally male-oriented) has helped explain the mechanisms that have been at work and which have led to policy outcomes that have remained below expectations.

Thirdly, both theoretical scholarly work and grey literature touch upon the issue of resistance to gender equality and / or that gender mainstreaming is faced with. This resistance argument is nevertheless hardly developed or critically examined: causes of resistance are hardly analysed, no distinction is made between resistance rooted in hostility to gender equality or caused by other concerns. In the present work, I distinguish different types of resistance, notably resistance against the goal of gender equality on the one hand and incapacity on the part of the actors who are expected to implement gender mainstreaming tasks on the other hand. I argue that such incapacity may lead to non-action or inadequate action – which can be read as resistance to gender mainstreaming. Where such non-action or inadequate action, due to incapacity, manifests itself on a large scale, I believe there is reason to suspect resistance to gender equality at higher hierarchical levels in the organisation which takes the form of insufficient resources being made available so that actors could act upon their duties. Such case, where it occurs, can then be labelled as institutional resistance and reveals the organisation's unwillingness to question and change its own 'deep' culture (the values and norms that are embedded within the organisation and that underpin its functioning).

With this case analysis, I have shown that rather than resistance to gender equality as such, other explanatory factors have been at work which caused the gender mainstreaming results remaining below expectations. These are notably incapacity and the lack of resources (in terms of time and in terms of adequate tools or instruments) on the part of individuals in charge of implementation tasks. However, while it seems that resistance is not directly attributable to the actors who are supposed to implement gender mainstreaming (albeit that exceptions can be found), this is not so evident for the highest hierarchical levels, and various elements have been identified that support the conclusion that explicit institutional resistance to gender equality in the DG Research does exist.

In the European Commission, the institutional processes and principles, notably the structurally embedded staff mobility, stand in the way for specialist subject matter knowledge development and on the way to the top of the organisation such knowledge seems to be sifted out and replaced by 'institutional expertise' (expert knowledge of the institutional processes, principles and functioning). In this light, it is no surprise that decisions taken at the top favour

institutional preservation over change. Considering then that, as we have seen, the people in power positions in the EC determine to a large extent the attitudes towards gender change in their departments, resistance to (gender) change manifested at the top has a paralysing effect on the underlying organisational levels. The occurrence of individual agency is in this light even more interesting. In an administration where progress to gender equality is seemingly structurally and institutionally held back under conditions of liquid compartmentalised bureaucracy, it does happen that individuals take the courage to fight the bureaucracy and position themselves as gender equality advocates. The research has shown that where locally reigning attitudes towards gender equality as a policy goal are more favourable, there is more space for pushing forward the realisation of agreed upon gender equality initiatives than in loci that are more closed to gender equality issues. In the latter, those actors who are courageous enough to take initiatives to support gender equality in science are likely to be held back and demotivated, which may even lead them to leave the Commission. This finding indicates a causal relation between the possibility or likeliness of the institution to retain femocrats and the locally reigning attitudes towards gender considerations. Indeed, where such attitudes are unfavourable, there is less space and opportunity for these actors to make a difference, which may result in them seeking other working environments.

The overview tables that follow summarise the main findings from each of the empirical chapters, in relation to the specific research questions.

Chapter 3. Structural provisions and measures for implementing gender mainstreaming in FP6

Where and when did variability and unevenness occur?	Unevenness in planning: not all actors were equally considered. Variability in performance by the actors. Led to unevenness in results.
How was the gender equality goal conceptualised? Were there any misunderstandings about the goal?	The dual goal (increasing women's participation and rendering research gender-sensitive) was formalised from the planning stage. A partial understanding of the goal in the practice led to a shrunk approach.
Are there any instances in which the deeply rooted values and structures have been mentioned and addressed?	The Guide for Proposers and the Vademecum contained a reference to the need to address the working culture in research organisations. No instances were found of the EC questioning its own structures.
Has gender mainstreaming been addressed as a staged process?	Gender mainstreaming was addressed as a staged process: analysis proceeded the planning, structural provisions and measures were put in place to facilitate the implementation, to be accompanied by monitoring studies.
Has the planning of gender mainstreaming considered all the actors? Have sufficient resources been foreseen?	The structural provisions put in place were quite comprehensive, but did not consider all, were incomplete and variable.

Chapter 3. Continued

Have there been consultations with or involvement of civil society organisations and/or gender experts?	Involvement of gender experts – to perform the gender monitoring studies – was foreseen in the planning. There were no incentives for taking up action: gender issues
Were there accountability structures or hard incentives in place?	were not to be marked during proposal evaluation; proposals got approved without (mandatory) Gender Action Plan; reporting requirements were not met → non-action went unchallenged.
Which manifestations of resistance can be identified and how can they be explained?	Lack of / insufficient intervention by actors can be explained by incapacity, lack of resources, flexibility towards researchers by EC project officers.
How have the institutional aspects (structures and culture) of the EC, and more particularly the co-existence of different attitudes towards gender equality as a policy goal within the institution, affected the process?	Institutional impediments found: lack of resources (notably time and operational systems).
What has been the role and space for individual actors to make a difference?	Aware and duty-minded actors took up their responsibility, to the best of their abilities. This led to some results, even in the absence of structural support.

Chapter 4. Women in European research: equal opportunities

Where and when did variability and unevenness occur?	There has been variability in performance and unevenness in results: Science and Society presented better results than Social Sciences and Humanities – which both had better statistics than the rest of FP6. There has been variability in time; generally there has been a small but steady increase at FP level. The exception has been the Descartes Prizes. Success rates of female coordinators better than of men for the smallest project form.
How was the gender equality goal conceptualised? Were there any misunderstandings about the goal?	There is no sign of misunderstanding of the goal to increase women's participation in FP6. There have been discussions however on the scope of the 40% target.
Are there any instances in which the deeply rooted values and structures have been mentioned and addressed?	The 'European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers' indicate the need to address organisational structures and values. However, this recommendation is addressed to researchers' employers. No instance was found of the EC questioning its own structures.
Has gender mainstreaming been addressed as a staged process?	While gender mainstreaming was addressed as a staged process, the planning was not complete. Especially the bridging from the policy level to the research community to do gender mainstreaming in projects was largely underestimated.
Has the planning of gender mainstreaming considered all the actors? Have sufficient resources been foreseen?	Awareness-raising efforts were found as important missing element. For Descartes Prizes, there were no adequate planning provisions. This led to poor performance (= policy evaporation).

Chapter 4. Continued

Have there been consultations with or involvement of civil society organisations and/or gender experts?	There is no sign that the gender monitoring studies have been influential; the studies did not get sufficient visibility to have 'naming and shaming' power (cfr. the Descartes Prizes).
Were there accountability structures or hard incentives in place?	Continued insistence on the 40% target and a 'naming and shaming' practice explain progress at FP level: publications of statistics on women's participation show a steady increase at FP level. Descartes Prizes escape the 'naming and shaming' and do not perform well. There is no progress at project level, which can be explained by the lack of incentives for researchers to make efforts (→ policy evaporation).
Which manifestations of resistance can be identified and how can they be explained?	Lack of progress is linked to lack of awareness, insufficient incentives and a too soft approach of the EC towards the research community.
How have the institutional aspects (structures and culture) of the EC, and more particularly the co-existence of different attitudes towards gender equality as a policy goal within the institution, affected the process?	There appear to be different levels of institutional embedding of the gender equality value within the DG: this leads to variable performances and uneven results. Better performance was identified by the department where gender responsibility is located, indicating more gender-consciousness and more favourable attitudes towards gender change in this locus. An exception is found in the communication unit, responsible for managing the Descartes Prizes, where the attitudes towards gender change are less favourable.
What has been the role and space for individual actors to make a difference?	People in power positions in departments can determine the local attitudes towards gender change, and thus play an important role in a positive or counter-productive sense.

Chapter 5. Gender in European research: mainstreaming gender in the projects

Where and when did variability and unevenness occur; which are the explanations and what is the impact?	Variability in planning, efforts and performance. Unevenness in uptake by actors and of results. Female coordinators do better in terms of gender considerations than their male counterparts. Gender performance in projects is better if gender is formally made explicit in FP documents.
How was the gender equality goal conceptualised? Were there any misunderstandings about the goal?	There is a tendency in projects to focus on women's participation ('counting heads' phenomenon). This can be attributed to lack of capacity and non-effective accountability mechanisms.
Are there any instances in which the deeply rooted values and structures have been mentioned and addressed?	No such instances have been identified.
Has gender mainstreaming been addressed as a staged process?	Only exceptionally was gender mainstreaming considered as a staged process: embedded in the project cycle. Planning of projects diverted from the much weaker implementation (= evaporation).

Chapter 5. Continued

Has the planning of gender mainstreaming considered all the actors? Have sufficient resources been foreseen?	Planning of projects was inadequate, insufficient resources were foreseen for gender-related actions. Project holders lacked capacity.
Have there been consultations with or involvement of civil society organisations and/or gender experts?	Institutional and structural obstacles to gender mainstreaming were pointed out by the gender monitoring studies contractors, but were not corrected. Gender experts were not listened to.
Were there accountability structures or hard incentives in place?	Gender-related promises were not kept; commitments were not followed up by the EC; accountability structures did not function for gender mainstreaming; there were no incentives to take up gender-related responsibilities.
Which manifestations of resistance can be identified and how can they be explained?	There have been clear efforts by actors to take up their responsibilities, which seems to rule out resistance. Disappointing performance may be attributed to lack of resources, the process not being addressed in a staged way; lack of capacity and missing incentives. Still, female project coordinators do better than men; while they are not better equipped. This may suggest resistance on the part of male coordinators.
How have the institutional aspects (structures and culture) of the EC, and more particularly the co-existence of different attitudes towards gender equality as a policy goal within the institution, affected the process?	Institutional barriers to gender mainstreaming are not removed. This may suggest resistance at higher hierarchical levels.
What has been the role and space for individual actors to make a difference?	Since there are no incentives and no rewards, positive performance for gender equality is not stimulated, and not even recognised (cfr. female coordinators).

Chapter 6. The 'Gender Action Plan': a new gender mainstreaming instrument

Where and when did variability and unevenness occur; which are the explanations and what is the impact?	Variability in the quality of the GAPs, including over time; variability in the impact of negotiations; in GAP reporting. These can be explained by capacity problems and lacking resources.
How was the gender equality goal conceptualised? Were there any misunderstandings about the goal?	There has been confusion about the purpose of the GAPs; a shrunk approach (to women's participation) was identified. The shrunk approach identified in the projects' practice became structurally fixed at the FP level.
Are there any instances in which the deeply rooted values and structures have been mentioned and addressed?	No such instances have been identified.

Chapter 6. Continued

Has gender mainstreaming been addressed as a staged process?	The concept of the GAP was 'staged': an analysis was to precede the actions, but there was no indication of resources to be foreseen and neither was the GAP conceived as to be linked to the project cycle (rather, it was an 'add-on'). At the FP level, the introduction of the GAP was not 'staged': awareness-raising, capacity building and support measures were missing.
Has the planning of gender mainstreaming considered all the actors? Have sufficient resources been foreseen?	Actors were not 'equipped' to work with the GAPs. There was no indication to foresee resources also at project level to implement the GAP.
Have there been consultations with or involvement of civil society organisations and/or gender experts?	Experts' (who performed the gender monitoring studies) and evaluators' recommendations were ignored.
Were there accountability structures or hard incentives in place?	Ineffective accountability measures and no incentives: the quality of the GAP was not scored in the proposal evaluation and GAP implementation was not followed up. → Rhetorical commitment
Which manifestations of resistance can be identified and how can they be explained?	Again: lack of capacity, of resources, of incentives. Failing follow-up by the EC suggested less importance being attached to gender equality. Focus on women's participation in projects did not lead to higher participation rates (→ lip service). The EC's shrunk approach to women's participation may be linked to an attempt to hide away disappointing results in terms of rendering research gender-sensitive, since... (see here below)
How have the institutional aspects (structures and culture) of the EC, and more particularly the co-existence of different attitudes towards gender equality as a policy goal within the institution, affected the process?	... the EC's mandate to prepare and implement policies, and to run evaluations of activities, may lead to a tendency to cover up results if results are not positive. The EC seems to be unwilling to address institutional aspects that impede effective gender mainstreaming.
What has been the role and space for individual actors to make a difference?	Within the projects, a 'GAP responsible' was usually appointed. Within the limits of their project and their own capacity, efforts have been undertaken by these persons to integrate gender in their projects.

Chapter 7. The case in context: the DG Research before, during and after FP6

Where and when did variability and unevenness occur; which are the explanations and what is the impact?	Performance seemed to be promising at the start of FP6, but decreased in the process of the implementation cycle.
How was the gender equality goal conceptualised? Were there any misunderstandings about the goal?	The 'shrunk' approach to gender equality in the implementation of FP6 became structurally fixed in the planning of FP7.
Are there any instances in which the deeply rooted values and structures have been mentioned and addressed?	No such instances have been identified. Rather, where it appeared that the institutional structures impeded effective gender mainstreaming, no adequate, corrective measures were taken.
Has gender mainstreaming been addressed as a staged process?	Also for FP7, there has been a planning stage preceding its implementation. However, since stages overlapped (FP6 implementation and FP7 preparation), the delineation of stages was blurred and decision-making responsibilities difficult to locate.
Has the planning of gender mainstreaming considered all the actors? Have sufficient resources been foreseen?	The provisions put in place for FP7 were less comprehensive than those in FP6 and did not provide all actors with the necessary resources.
Have there been consultations with or involvement of civil society organisations and/or gender experts?	Although input was structurally foreseen, the EC has not been receptive to expert input at the time of FP6 and FP7 preparations. This may indicate institutional resistance to interference that may affect its own powers.
Were there accountability structures or hard incentives in place?	The lack of internal accountability structures reinforces the negative effects that the organisational features ('the liquid bureaucracy') have on the gender mainstreaming strategy.
Which manifestations of resistance can be identified and how can they be explained?	Pockets of resistance can exist and continue to persist in the EC, depending on people who occupy power positions in that locus. The EC shows resistance to address institutional impediments to gender mainstreaming, as well as resistance to take into account expert input.
How have the institutional aspects (structures and culture) of the EC, and more particularly the co-existence of different attitudes towards gender equality as a policy goal within the institution, affected the process?	The liquid bureaucracy prevents learning, knowledge building, ownership of initiatives, accountability mechanisms. People come and go; this makes for changing situations of alliances, knowledge, motivation, empowerment, and changing local attitudes towards gender equality as a policy goal. Windows of opportunity open and close.
What has been the role and space for individual actors to make a difference?	Individuals can shape the locally reigning attitudes towards gender change, especially if they occupy a position of power.

Samenvatting

Gender, gendergelijkheid en gender mainstreaming zijn concepten uit de feministische theorie die op het beleidsniveau ingang hebben gevonden omdat ze een alternatief bieden voor de bestaande problematische ongelijkheid tussen vrouwen en mannen.

Hoewel feministische politieke wetenschappers sterk geloofden in het transformatieve potentieel van gender mainstreaming, kunnen ze niet verklaren waarom gender mainstreaming niet het gewenste resultaat heeft geleverd. Dit is een probleem. Wetenschappers gaan wel akkoord dat er problemen zijn met de implementatie van de strategie, maar terzelfdertijd blijft de implementatie van gender mainstreaming onderbestudeerd. Als gevolg hiervan zijn velen beginnen te speculeren over de mogelijke oorzaken voor variabele resultaten van gender mainstreaming. Deze theorieën zijn echter gefragmenteerd, ongestructureerd en gebaseerd op eerder losse empirische gronden. Het voorliggend onderzoek beoogt bij te dragen tot het herstellen van deze situatie.

Terwijl de bestaande theoriën voorbijgaan aan het feit dat er verschillende stadia zijn in het proces van gender mainstreaming, stel ik dat het nodig is om een onderscheid te maken tussen de fase waarin het beleid wordt gemaakt (het politieke proces van beslissingsname tot aan de formele aanname van gender mainstreaming als een strategie) en de implementatiefase, en binnen de implementatiefase tussen de planning van de uitvoering en de eigenlijke uitvoering van de strategie in de praktijk.

De gevalstudie neemt gender mainstreaming in het onderzoeksbeleid van de EU onder de loep; een beleidsgebied waarin men reeds een aantal jaren met de implementatie van gender mainstreaming bezig is en dat dus de mogelijkheid biedt om de evolutie over de tijd heen te analyseren. Aangezien de coördinatie en financiering van Europese onderzoeksactiviteiten georganiseerd is in zogenoemde “kaderprogramma’s” die over meerdere jaren lopen en die een cyclisch karakter hebben, laat de studie van de implementatie van gender mainstreaming in het onderzoeksdomein toe om de planning van de implementatie te onderscheiden als zijnde verschillende fasen in de beleidscyclus.

In de bestaande literatuur over gender mainstreaming door de Europese Commissie wordt variabiliteit herkend in hoe het uiteindelijke doel van gender mainstreaming wordt begrepen, in de opname van de strategie, in de aanpak ervan en in de toegepaste technieken. Dit alles leidt tot variabiliteit in de doeltreffendheid van de strategie, en dus tot onevenwichtigheden in de resultaten van gender mainstreaming. Sleutelbegrippen voor de analyse van de case zijn dus “variabiliteit” en “onevenwichtigheid” in de opname, de praktijken en de resultaten, omdat deze de “doeltreffendheid” van de strategie bepalen. In mijn gevalsanalyse zal ik dus systematisch de variabiliteit en onevenwichtigheid aanduiden waar deze zich voordoen. Pas daarna kunnen de mechanismen worden bloot gelegd die werkzaam zijn geweest en die de resultaten hebben aangetast.

Een nieuwe richting van denken over instellingen en hoe deze hun genderbeleid voeren, namelijk het feministisch institutionalisme, lijkt veelbelovend en verdient meer aandacht. Deze wetenschappers onderzoeken de verbanden tussen de institutionele aspecten en het potentieel en de resultaten van de inspanningen voor meer gendergelijkheid vanwege deze instellingen. (Chappell, 2006, 2010; Mackay & Meier, 2003; Mackay & Waylen, 2009; Wieringa, 1994). Hoewel deze jonge denkschool nog niet kan bogen op een robuuste set literatuur, erkennen de theoretici die deze school aanhangen dat er in het bestaande werk van feministische wetenschappers (die zichzelf niet noodzakelijk als feministische institutionalisten beschouwen) belangrijke stukken kennis te vinden zijn die de feministische institutionele theorie kunnen steunen. Om deze reden heb ik uit het bestaande werken de meest belovende elementen geselecteerd, waarbij ik respectievelijk gekeken heb naar wat is geschreven over (mogelijk problematische) conceptualisering van gender mainstreaming en gender gelijkheid, over de voorwaarden voor doeltreffende gender mainstreaming en over weerstanden.

Eerst echter heb ik de bestaande discussies over de Europese Commissie bestudeerd, hoe haar kenmerken haar inspanningen op het gebied van gender mainstreaming mogelijk beïnvloeden, en wat de rol van actoren kan zijn in deze setting. Op basis van deze theoretische analyse heb ik vastgesteld dat academische literatuur over de Europese Commissie inderdaad suggereert dat haar institutionele kenmerken invloed hebben op haar prestaties waar het de implementatie van genderbeleid betreft. Met name haar algemene zwakte op gebied van tenuitvoeringlegging van beleid, de afwezigheid van gespecialiseerde kennis, het ontbreken van harde stimuli, de opsplitsing van de macht en de heterogeniteit tussen de leiders worden aangewezen als factoren die de doeltreffendheid ondermijnen van gender mainstreaming. Op basis van de literatuurstudie blijkt dat de institutionele aard van de Europese Commissie kan worden gekarakteriseerd als een vloeibare, gecompartmentaliseerde bureaucratie waarin verschillende standpunten ten aanzien van veranderingen in genderverhoudingen naast elkaar kunnen bestaan. De onderzoeksvragen die uit deze vaststelling voortvloeien zijn dan of de gevalstudie inderdaad deze karakterisering bevestigt, en indien dit zo is, in welke mate deze institutionele kenmerken een impact hebben gehad op de tenuitvoeringlegging van gender mainstreaming en wat de rol van individuen is of kan zijn in dergelijke setting. In antwoord op de eerste vraag heeft het voorliggend werk bevestigd dat het directoraat-generaal Onderzoek inderdaad aan de gegeven beschrijving beantwoordt. De bevindingen met betrekking tot de tweede vraag worden duidelijk aan de hand van de resultaten van de overige bestudeerde kwesties.

De analytische aanpak voor de gevalstudie concentreert zich op de conceptualisering van de doelstellingen van gender gelijkheid, de mate waarin de sleutelvoorwaarden voor doeltreffende gender mainstreaming vervuld zijn, of en hoe weerstand de implementatie en resultaten van gender mainstreaming heeft beïnvloed en, tenslotte, hoe institutionele elementen een invloed hebben uitgeoefend op het proces van gender mainstreaming.

Binnen het Zesde Kaderprogramma voor Onderzoek en Ontwikkeling van de Europese Commissie (KP6) focust de gevalstudie op de wetenschappelijke gebieden die de Sociale en

Menswetenschappen dekken, alsook het zogenoemde gebied 'Wetenschap en Maatschappij'. Deze delen werden diepgaand geanalyseerd. Het onderzoek steunt vooral op een analyse van alle relevante data, rapporten en documenten in verband met het Zesde Kaderprogramma in het algemeen en de voor deze studie relevante onderzoeksgebieden in het bijzonder. Dit omvat de werkprogramma's; richtlijnen voor indieners en evaluatoren van onderzoeksvorstellen; de oproepen tot voorstellen; alle evaluatie-rapporten en rapporten van onafhankelijke observatoren; de evaluatieverslagen van alle ingediende voorstellen die boven de drempelwaarden werden geëvalueerd, alsook van de gender-specifieke voorstellen die werden verworpen; en voor een gestratificeerde steekproef van gefinancierde projecten de voorstellen en de technische annexen van de contracten, activiteitenrapporten en andere projectrapporten. Door haar betrokkenheid in vele opdrachten voor het directoraat-generaal Onderzoek van de Europese Commissie (zowel voor, tijdens als na het Zesde Kaderprogramma) heeft de auteur ook zeer veelvuldige contacten, vergaderingen en uitwisselingen gehad met personeel van dit directoraat-generaal en met andere experts die voor de EC werken. Hierdoor is een onafgebroken proces van waarnemende observatie mogelijk geweest, wat belangrijke inzichten heeft opgeleverd voor de huidige studie. Enkele interviews hebben deze observaties aangevuld. Deze combinatie van methodologische technieken (vooral documentaire analyse en waarnemende observatie) hebben het mogelijk gemaakt om omvattender conclusies te trekken.

De analyse gaat achtereenvolgens in op de structuren die binnen het Kaderprogramma werden voorzien ter ondersteuning van gender mainstreaming, of in andere woorden de 'planning' van de tenuitvoeringlegging en de mogelijke tekortkomingen hierin (hoofdstuk 3); op de mate waarin de dubbele doelstelling werd gerealiseerd: het verhogen van de deelname van vrouwen (hoofdstuk 4) en het gendergevoelig maken van het onderzoekswerk zelf (hoofdstuk 5). Het Gender Actieplan, een instrument dat specifiek werd ontwikkeld om de integratie van genderaspecten in onderzoekswerk onder het Zesde Kaderprogramma mogelijk te maken, wordt kritisch onderzocht in hoofdstuk 6. Een laatste empirisch hoofdstuk (hoofdstuk 7) richt zich op de institutionele context en hoe deze evolueerde, wat helpt om de gender mainstreaming resultaten te begrijpen in het licht van de institutionele kenmerken.

Als we kijken naar wat door gender wetenschappers wordt gesteld, dan is er eerst en vooral de kwestie van hoe de gender mainstreaming doelstelling wordt geconceptualiseerd. Wanneer namelijk het doel niet duidelijk wordt geconceptualiseerd in de fase waarin het beleid wordt gedefinieerd, dan valt het te verwachten dat dit tot problemen zal leiden tijdens de tenuitvoeringlegging. Daarom heb ik geverifieerd of er een beleidsspecifieke doelstelling van gendergelijkheid gedefinieerd was die nagestreefd diende te worden met de gender mainstreaming strategie, of deze doelstelling duidelijk werd gecommuniceerd naar alle actoren die betrokken zouden zijn in de implementatiefase zodat zij zouden weten naar welk doel ze dienden toe te werken, en (niet onbelangrijk) of het doel ook door de respectievelijke actoren werd begrepen. Verder heb ik geanalyseerd hoe de implementatie van gender mainstreaming heeft bijgedragen om de beleidsdoelstelling te realiseren, of er in de loop van het proces een

evolutie op te merken viel, welke invloed institutionele elementen hebben gehad op deze evolutie en welke de effecten waren op de resultaten van gender mainstreaming. Vervolgens, op een meer theoretisch niveau, heb ik tevens beoordeeld hoe de beleidsdoelstelling zoals deze in mijn gevalstudie geformuleerd werd, zich verhoudt tot de theorieën die het hebben over de verschillende strategieën om gendergelijkheid te realiseren. Verder, gezien theoreticae een 'agenda-bepalende' beleidsdefinitie naar voor schuiven als die met het meeste potentieel om tot transformatieve resultaten te komen, verifieer ik in welke mate de beleidsdefinitie in mijn casus beschouwd kan worden als agenda-bepalend, en ga ik na wat dit betekent voor de resultaten.

De casus die in dit werk werd geanalyseerd, heeft aangetoond dat het ontwerp van de gender mainstreaming strategie (het plan) inderdaad multi-dimensioneel is geweest. Reeds van bij de aanvang onder het Vijfde Kaderprogramma en ook in het ontwerp van KP6 waren er aandacht en inspanningen ter verhoging van de deelname van vrouwen, voor gericht onderzoek over genderkwesties als dusdanig, alsook inspanningen om onderzoek meer gendergevoelig te maken. De uitvoering evolueerde echter naar een minder diepgaande en een engere interpretatie gezien de aandacht, de middelen en het engagement voor gender mainstreaming niet alleen bleken te verwateren met de tijd maar ook versmalden tot een bijna exclusieve focus op de participatie van vrouwen. Kortweg, naar het eind van KP6 toe en bij de start van KP7 was wat er overbleef van het oorspronkelijke plan aanzienlijk gekrompen. Deze gekrompen aanpak werd verdergezet onder KP7 en werd zelfs structureel vastgelegd voor de volgende beleidsimplementatie-cyclus, onder andere door de afschaffing van de Gender Actieplannen. Logischerwijs kwamen de resultaten die konden worden voorgelegd aan het eind van de cyclus niet overeen met de verwachte resultaten waartoe de strategie had kunnen leiden. Als de strategie was uitgevoerd zoals ze was gepland, dan had ze - niettegenstaande haar tekortkomingen - meer vooruitgang opgeleverd. Hoewel de doelstelling van gendergelijkheid als redelijk 'agenda-bepalend' kan worden beschouwd, was het eindresultaat niet transformatief omwille van de tekortkomingen in de implementatie. De studie heeft aangetoond dat de actoren die betrokken waren in de uitvoering van het gender mainstreaming-werk heel gevoelig zijn voor het institutionele engagement ten aanzien van gendergelijkheid. Als dit institutioneel engagement niet overtuigend is (als de retoriek niet blijkt overeen te stemmen met de realiteit wanneer het gaat over beschikbare middelen, stimuli of sancties, en aangehouden aandacht), dan verzwakt de motivatie van de actoren om degelijk te presteren, gezien de actoren de prioriteit van hun werk bepalen in functie van hoe ze de verwachtingen van hun werkgever of de financierende overheid inschatten.

Ten tweede, steunend op de bestaande literatuur en in het licht van een institutionele aanpak om tekortkomingen in de uitvoering van gender mainstreaming te verklaren, heb ik vier voorwaarden voor doeltreffende mainstreaming bepaald. Deze voorwaarden zijn, ten eerste, de bereidheid van de organisatie om haar eigen structuren en cultuur in vraag te stellen en aan te pakken: de diepgewortelde machtsstructuren, genderhiërarchieën, waarden en waardenkaders

die binnen de organisatie bestaan. Ten tweede, het uitvoeren van gender mainstreaming als een gefaseerd proces, vertrekkende van een grondige analyse en invraagstelling van de bestaande situatie, waarop de definitie en planning van acties kan worden gebaseerd, structurele voorzieningen gemaakt, en alle actoren volledig kunnen worden uitgerust (met instrumenten en middelen), waarop een behoorlijk opgevolgde en geëvalueerde uitvoering kan volgen. Ten derde, overleg met en betrokkenheid van het maatschappelijk middenveld en/of experts tijdens het beleidsproces. Een laatste voorwaarde, ten slotte, zijn structuren en systemen die toelaten om actoren ter verantwoording te roepen, of 'harde stimuli': het verantwoordelijk houden van mensen voor hun acties en de resultaten ervan.

In dit onderzoek heb ik uitgezocht in welke mate de verschillende voorwaarden vervuld waren, of en hoe dit de uitvoering van gender mainstreaming heeft beïnvloed, en hoe de karakterisering van de instelling als een vloeibare, gecompartmenteerde bureaucratie kan helpen verklaren wat zich heeft voorgedaan. Rekening houdende met hoe de Europese Commissie wordt geconceptualiseerd, valt het te verwachten dat we zullen vaststellen dat tenminste de vierde voorwaarde (met betrekking tot de verantwoordingsplicht) on vervuld zal zijn in deze instelling.

Het onderzoek heeft aangetoond dat de sleutelvoorwaarden niet vervuld waren: het ontbrak de organisatie aan wil om haar eigen structuren en diepgewortelde waarden in vraag te stellen en aan te pakken; de actoren waren niet adequaat uitgerust; de Europese Commissie minimaliseerde de betrokkenheid van experts en was niet bereid om niet-hegemonische stemmen invloed te laten hebben op de koers die ze voer, en tot slot ontbraken er structuren en systemen om actoren ter verantwoording te roepen. Verder blijkt uit de analyse dat er een duidelijk verband is tussen het ontbreken van succes van gender mainstreaming in KP6 en het niet vervuld zijn van de beschouwde sleutelvoorwaarden voor gender mainstreaming. Inzicht in de institutionele processen en kenmerken van de Commissie (een organisatie waar de hoogste hiërarchische niveaus sterk gedomineerd worden door mannen en waarvan de culturele waarden traditioneel mannelijk georiënteerd zijn) heeft bijgedragen om de mechanismen te verklaren die werkzaam zijn geweest en die hebben geleid tot beleidsresultaten die beneden de verwachtingen gebleven zijn.

Ten derde, maken zowel wetenschappelijk theoretisch werk als grijze literatuur melding van weerstand tegen gendergelijkheid en / of tegen gender mainstreaming. Dit weerstand-argument werd echter nauwelijks uitgewerkt of kritisch onderzocht: de oorzaken van weerstand werden amper geanalyseerd; er wordt geen onderscheid gemaakt tussen weerstand die geworteld is in vijandigheid jegens gendergelijkheid of die veroorzaakt wordt door andere bekommernissen. In voorliggend werk onderscheid ik verschillende types van weerstand, namelijk weerstand tegen het doel van gendergelijkheid aan de ene kant en onbekwaamheid in hoofdte van de actoren die verwacht worden om gender mainstreaming taken uit te voeren aan de andere kant. Mijn argument is dat dergelijke onbekwaamheid tot non-actie of tot inadequate actie aanleiding kan geven – wat geïnterpreteerd kan worden als een vorm van weerstand tegen gender

mainstreaming. Waar zulke non-actie of inadequate actie ten gevolge van onbekwaamheid zich op grote schaal voordoet, stel ik dat er redenen zijn om het bestaan te vermoeden van weerstand tegen gendergelijkheid op de hogere hiërarchische niveaus in de organisatie. Deze weerstand manifesteert zich dan door onvoldoende middelen ter beschikking te stellen van de actoren om hun taken uit te voeren. De gevallen waar dit zich voordoet kunnen dan bestempeld worden als 'institutionele weerstand' en geven blijk van de onwil van de organisatie om haar eigen 'diepe' cultuur (de waarden en normen die ingebed zijn in de organisatie en waarop haar functioneren berust) in vraag te stellen en aan te pakken.

Met deze gevalstudie heb ik aangetoond dat er, eerder dan weerstand tegen gendergelijkheid als zodanig, andere factoren aan het werk zijn geweest die ertoe geleid hebben dat de gender mainstreaming resultaten beneden de verwachtingen zijn gebleven. Deze factoren zijn met name de onbekwaamheid en het gebrek aan middelen (wat betreft tijd en adequate instrumenten) bij de individuen die verantwoordelijk waren voor uitvoerende taken. Hoewel weerstand niet direct attribueerbaar is aan de actoren die verwacht worden gender mainstreaming te implementeren (hoewel er uitzonderingen kunnen gevonden worden), is dit niet zo vanzelfsprekend voor de hoogste hiërarchische niveaus. Verschillende elementen werden geïdentificeerd die de conclusie ondersteunen dat er expliciete institutionele weerstand bestaat tegen gendergelijkheid in het directoraat-generaal Onderzoek van de Europese Commissie.

Institutionele processen en principes, en in het bijzonder de structureel ingebedde personeelsmobiliteit, verhinderen binnen de Europese Commissie dat gespecialiseerde kennis over specifieke onderwerpen zich kan ontwikkelen. En op de weg naar de top van de organisatie lijkt zulke kennis weg gefilterd te worden en vervangen door 'institutionele expertise' (expertkennis van de institutionele processen, principes en het functioneren van de instelling). In dit licht is het dan ook niet verbazend dat beslissingen die genomen worden aan de top institutioneel behoud boven verandering beogen. Als we daarbij bedenken dat, zoals we hebben gezien, de mensen in machtsposities binnen de EC in grote mate de attitude tegenover veranderingen in genderverhoudingen bepalen in hun afdelingen, dan heeft weerstand tegen dergelijke verandering die zich voordoet aan de top een verlamrend effect op de onderliggende organisatieniveaus. Dit maakt het feit dat er individuele actoren optreden in het proces des te interessanter. In een administratie waarin de evolutie naar meer gendergelijkheid zowel structureel als institutioneel schijnt te worden tegengehouden in omstandigheden van vloeibare en gecompartmenteerde bureaucratie, gebeurt het toch dat individuen de moed vinden om de bureaucratie te bestrijden en zich opstellen als pleitbezorgers van gendergelijkheid. Het onderzoek heeft aangetoond dat waar de lokaal heersende attitudes jegens gendergelijkheid als beleidsdoelstelling gunstiger zijn, er meer ruimte is om te werken aan de realisatie van overeen gekomen initiatieven voor gendergelijkheid dan in de afdelingen die zich meer gesloten opstellen jegens gendergelijkheidsoverwegingen. In deze laatste zullen actoren die moedig genoeg zijn om initiatieven te nemen ter ondersteuning van gendergelijkheid in wetenschap naar alle waarschijnlijkheid worden tegengehouden en gedemotiveerd, wat hen er zelfs toe kan

brengen om de Commissie te verlaten. Deze bevinding geeft een causaal verband aan tussen de mogelijkheid of waarschijnlijkheid van de instelling om femocraten te behouden en de lokaal heersende standpunten jegens genderoverwegingen. Waar dergelijke standpunten ongunstig zijn is er immers minder ruimte en gelegenheid voor deze actoren om een verschil te maken, wat er toe kan leiden dat ze andere werkomgevingen zoeken.

Tot slot presenteer ik per empirisch hoofdstuk een overzichtstabel. De overzichtstabellen vatten de belangrijkste bevindingen van elk van de empirische hoofdstukken samen voor elk van de specifieke onderzoeksvragen.

Hoofdstuk 3. Structurele voorzieningen en maatregelen voor de tenuitvoeringlegging van gender mainstreaming in KP6

Waar en wanneer deden variabiliteit en onevenwichtigheid zich voor?	Onevenwichtigheid in planning: er werd niet met alle actoren in gelijke mate rekening gehouden. Variabiliteit in de prestaties door de actoren. Dit leidde tot onevenwichtigheid in de resultaten.
Hoe werd het doel van gendergelijkheid geconceptualiseerd? Waren er misverstanden over dit doel?	Het dubbele doel (de deelname van vrouwen verhogen en onderzoek gendergevoelig maken) werd geformaliseerd van in de planningfase. Een gedeeltelijk begrijpen van de doelstelling leidde tot een gekrompen aanpak.
Zijn er gevallen te vinden waar de diepgewortelde waarden en structuren worden vermeld en aangepakt?	De Gids voor Indiërs van voorstellen (Guide for Proposers) en het Vademecum verwijzen naar de noodzaak om de werkcultuur in onderzoeksorganisaties aan te pakken. Geen voorbeelden werden gevonden waarin de EC haar eigen structuren in vraag stelt.
Werd gender mainstreaming aangepakt als een gefaseerd proces?	Gender mainstreaming werd gefaseerd aangepakt: een analyse ging de planning vooraf, structurele voorzieningen en maatregelen beoogden de uitvoering te ondersteunen en er waren opvolgingsstudies om het proces te begeleiden.
Werd er bij de planning van gender mainstreaming met alle actoren rekening gehouden? Werden er voldoende middelen voorzien?	De structurele maatregelen die werden voorzien waren omvattend, maar hielden niet met alle actoren rekening; ze waren onvolledig en variabel.
Was er overleg met of betrokkenheid van middenveldorganisaties en/of gender experts?	Betrokkenheid van gender experts – om de gender opvolgingsstudies uit te voeren – was voorzien in de planning.
Waren er structuren voor verantwoording of harde stimuli?	Er waren geen stimuli voor het nemen van actie: genderoverwegingen kregen geen scores tijdens de evaluatie van onderzoeksvorstellen; voorstellen zonder een (verplicht) Gender Actieplan werden goedgekeurd; verplichtingen van rapportage bleven onvervuld → non-actie werd niet bestreden.
Welke uitingen van weerstand kunnen worden geïdentificeerd en hoe kunnen ze worden verklaard?	Het ontbreken van (voldoende) interventie door actoren kan worden uitgelegd door onbekwaamheid, gebrek aan middelen, flexibiliteit vanwege EC projectverantwoordelijken ten opzichte van de onderzoekers.

Hoofdstuk 3. Vervolg

Hoe hebben de institutionele aspecten (structuren en cultuur) van de EC, en meer bepaald het naast elkaar bestaan van verschillende houdingen jegens gendergelijkheid als beleidsdoelstelling binnen de instelling, het proces beïnvloed?	Volgende institutionele belemmeringen werden geïdentificeerd: gebrek aan middelen (met name tijd en bruikbare systemen).
Welke rol en ruimte was er voor individuele actoren?	Gender- en plichtsbewuste actoren hebben naar best vermogen hun verantwoordelijkheid opgenomen. Dit heeft in zekere mate tot resultaten geleid, zelfs in de afwezigheid van structurele ondersteuning.

Hoofdstuk 4. Vrouwen in Europees onderzoek: gelijke kansen

Waar en wanneer deden variabiliteit en onevenwichtigheid zich voor?	De prestaties waren variabel en de resultaten onevenwichtig: Wetenschap en Maatschappij heeft betere resultaten voorgelegd dan Sociale en Menswetenschappen – welke beiden betere statistieken hadden dan de rest van KP6. Er is variabiliteit geweest in de tijd; in het algemeen is er een kleine maar regelmatige stijging van het aantal vrouwen op het KP niveau. De uitzondering waren de Descartes Prijzen. De succesratio van vrouwelijke coördinatoren is beter dan die van mannen voor de kleinste projectmodellen.
Hoe werd het doel van gendergelijkheid geconceptualiseerd? Waren er misverstanden over dit doel?	Er zijn geen tekenen dat er misverstanden waren met betrekking tot het doel om de deelname van vrouwen in KP6 te verhogen. Er zijn wel discussies geweest over de draagwijdte van het 40% streefcijfer.
Zijn er gevallen te vinden waar de diepgewortelde waarden en structuren worden vermeld en aangepakt?	Het 'Europese Handvest voor Onderzoekers en de Gedragsrichtlijn voor de Recruitering van Onderzoekers' geeft de noodzaak aan om organisationele structuren en waarden te veranderen. Deze aanbeveling is echter gericht aan de werkgevers van onderzoekers. Er werd geen voorbeeld gevonden waarbij de EC haar eigen structuren in vraag stelt.
Werd gender mainstreaming aangepakt als een gefaseerd proces?	Hoewel gender mainstreaming aangepakt werd als een gefaseerd proces, was de planning niet volledig. Vooral het overbruggen van het beleidsniveau naar de onderzoeksgemeenschap om gender mainstreaming toe te passen in de projecten werd grotendeels onderschat.
Werd er bij de planning van gender mainstreaming met alle actoren rekening gehouden? Werden er voldoende middelen voorzien?	Een belangrijk ontbrekend element zijn inspanningen om het bewustzijn te verhogen. Voor de Descartes Prijzen waren er geen behoorlijke voorzieningen gepland. Dit heeft geleid tot zwakke resultaten (→ beleidsevaporatie).
Was er overleg met of betrokkenheid van middenveldorganisaties en/of gender experten?	Er is geen signaal dat de gender opvolgingsstudies een invloed hebben gehad; de studies kregen niet genoeg visibiliteit om over een 'naming and shaming' macht te beschikken (cfr. de Descartes Prijzen).

Hoofdstuk 4. Vervolg

Waren er structuren voor verantwoording of harde stimuli?	Volgehouden nadruk op het 40% streefdoel en een 'naming and shaming' aanpak verklaren de vooruitgang op het KP niveau: publicaties van statistieken over de deelname van vrouwen tonen een regelmatige stijging op het niveau van het KP. Descartes Prijzen ontsnappen aan de 'naming and shaming' en doen het niet goed. Er is geen vooruitgang op het projectniveau, wat kan verklaard worden door een gebrek aan stimuli voor onderzoekers om inspanningen te leveren (→ beleidselevatoratie).
Welke uitingen van weerstand kunnen worden geïdentificeerd en hoe kunnen ze worden verklaard?	Gebrek aan vooruitgang houdt verband met een gebrek aan bewustzijn, onvoldoende stimuli en een te zwakke aanpak van de EC naar de onderzoeksgemeenschap toe.
Hoe hebben de institutionele aspecten (structuren en cultuur) van de EC, en meer bepaald het naast elkaar bestaan van verschillende houdingen jegens gendergelijkheid als beleidsdoelstelling binnen de instelling, het proces beïnvloed?	De waarde van gendergelijkheid blijkt niet overal even diep institutioneel ingebed te zijn binnen het directoraat-generaal: dit leidt tot variabele prestaties en onevenwichtige resultaten. Betere resultaten werden genoteerd bij het departement dat de genderverantwoordelijkheid draagt. Deze bevinding suggereert een hoger genderbewustzijn en gunstiger attitudes ten opzichte van veranderingen in genderverhoudingen in deze afdeling. Een uitzondering werd gevonden in de communicatie-cel, verantwoordelijk voor de Descartes Prijzen, waar de houding tegenover verandering in genderverhoudingen minder gunstig is.
Welke rol en ruimte was er voor individuele actoren?	Zij die machtsposities bekleden in afdelingen kunnen de lokale attitudes ten opzichte van veranderingen in genderverhoudingen bepalen. Zij spelen dus een belangrijke rol, in positieve of contra-productieve zin.

Hoofdstuk 5. Gender in Europees onderzoek: het mainstreamen van gender in de projecten

Waar en wanneer deden variabiliteit en onevenwichtigheid zich voor?	Variabiliteit doet zich voor in de planning, de inspanningen en de prestaties. Er is onevenwichtigheid in het opnemen van verantwoordelijkheden door actoren en in de resultaten. Vrouwelijke coördinatoren doen het beter op gebied van genderoverwegingen in hun projecten dan mannen. Projecten scoren beter wat gender betreft als gender formeel en expliciet is opgenomen in de KP documenten.
Hoe werd het doel van gendergelijkheid geconceptualiseerd? Waren er misverstanden over dit doel?	In de projecten is er een tendens om te focussen op de participatie van vrouwen (het fenomeen van 'hoofden tellen'). Dit kan toegewezen worden aan het gebrek aan bekwaamheid en ondoeltreffende mechanismen voor verantwoordingaflegging.
Zijn er gevallen te vinden waar de diepgewortelde waarden en structuren worden vermeld en aangepakt?	Er werden geen dergelijke gevallen gevonden.

Hoofdstuk 5. Vervolg

Werd gender mainstreaming aangepakt als een gefaseerd proces?	Slechts uitzonderlijk werd gender mainstreaming als een gefaseerd proces aangepakt in de projecten: ingebed in de projectcyclus. De planning van projecten stemde niet overeen met de veel zwakkere implementatie (= evaporatie).
Werd er bij de planning van gender mainstreaming met alle actoren rekening gehouden? Werden er voldoende middelen voorzien?	Planning van projecten was inadequaar, onvoldoende middelen waren voorzien voor gender-gerelateerde acties. Het ontbrak projecthouders aan kunde.
Was er overleg met of betrokkenheid van middenveldorganisaties en/of gender experts?	Hoewel institutionele en structurele obstakels voor gender mainstreaming werden aangewezen door de uitvoerders van de gender opvolgingsstudies, werden deze obstakels niet gecorrigeerd. Er werd niet geluisterd naar gender experts.
Waren er structuren voor verantwoording of harde stimuli?	Gender-gerelateerde beloften werden niet gehouden; engagementen werden door de EC niet opgevolgd; structuren voor verantwoordingaflegging functioneerden niet voor gender mainstreaming; er waren geen stimuli om het opnemen van gender-gerelateerde verantwoordelijkheden aan te moedigen.
Welke uitingen van weerstand kunnen worden geïdentificeerd en hoe kunnen ze worden verklaard?	Er zijn duidelijke inspanningen geweest vanwege actoren om hun verantwoordelijkheden op te nemen. Dit lijkt weerstand uit te sluiten. Teleurstellende prestaties kunnen toegewezen worden aan een gebrek aan middelen, het feit dat het proces niet op een gefaseerde manier werd aangepakt; het gebrek aan kunde en ontbrekende stimuli. Nochtans doen vrouwelijke projectcoördinatoren het beter dan mannen; terwijl ze niet beter uitgerust zijn. Dit zou weerstand kunnen suggereren in hoofde van de mannelijke coördinatoren.
Hoe hebben de institutionele aspecten (structuren en cultuur) van de EC, en meer bepaald het naast elkaar bestaan van verschillende houdingen jegens gendergelijkheid als beleidsdoelstelling binnen de instelling, het proces beïnvloed?	Institutionele belemmeringen voor gender mainstreaming worden niet weggewerkt. Dit kan weerstand suggereren op de hogere hiërarchische niveaus.
Welke rol en ruimte was er voor individuele actoren?	Gezien er geen stimuli of beloningen zijn, worden positieve prestaties voor gendergelijkheid niet gestimuleerd en zelfs niet erkend (cfr. de vrouwelijke coördinatoren).

Hoofdstuk 6. Het 'Gender Actieplan': een nieuw instrument voor gender mainstreaming

Waar en wanneer deden variabiliteit en onevenwichtigheid zich voor?	Variabiliteit in de kwaliteit van de GAPs, inclusief in de tijd; variabiliteit in de impact van de onderhandelingen; in de GAP rapportage. Deze variabiliteit kan verklaard worden door problemen van bekwaamheid en ontbrekende middelen.
Hoe werd het doel van gendergelijkheid geconceptualiseerd? Waren er misverstanden over dit doel?	Er is verwarring geweest over de bedoeling van de GAPs; een gekrompen aanpak (gericht op de deelname van vrouwen) werd opgemerkt. De gekrompen aanpak die opgemerkt werd in de praktijk van de projecten werd structureel vastgelegd op het KP niveau.

Hoofdstuk 6. Vervolg

Zijn er gevallen te vinden waar de diepgewortelde waarden en structuren worden vermeld en aangepakt?	Er werden geen dergelijke gevallen gevonden.
Werd gender mainstreaming aangepakt als een gefaseerd proces?	Het concept van het Gender Actieplan was 'gefaseerd': een analyse moest de acties voorafgaan, maar er was geen verwijzing naar het voorzien van middelen en evenmin waren de GAPs opgevat om gelinkt te worden aan de projectcyclus (het was eerder een toevoegsel). Op het KP niveau gebeurde de introductie van de GAPs niet gefaseerd: er waren geen maatregelen ter bewustmaking, voor het ontwikkelen van competenties of ter ondersteuning.
Werd er bij de planning van gender mainstreaming met alle actoren rekening gehouden? Werden er voldoende middelen voorzien?	Actors waren niet 'toegerust' om te werken met de GAPs. Er was geen instructive om ook op het projectniveau middelen te voorzien voor de implementatie van de GAPs.
Was er overleg met of betrokkenheid van middenveldorganisaties en/of gender experts?	De aanbevelingen van experts (die de gender opvolgingsstudies uitvoerden) en van evaluatoren werden genegeerd.
Waren er structuren voor verantwoording of harde stimuli?	Ondoeltreffende maatregelen voor verantwoordingstelling en geen stimuli: de kwaliteit van de GAPs moest niet gescoord worde tijdens de evaluatie van onderzoeksvoorstellen en de uitvoering van de GAPs werd niet opgevolgd. → Rhetorisch engagement
Welke uitingen van weerstand kunnen worden geïdentificeerd en hoe kunnen ze worden verklaard?	Terug: gebrek aan bekwaamheid, middelen, stimuli. Falende opvolging door de EC suggereert dat er minder belang wordt gehecht aan gendergelijkheid. Focus op deelname van vrouwen in project leidde niet tot hogere participatiegraden (→ lippendienst). De gekrompen aanpak van de EC tot deelname van vrouwen kan verband houden met een poging om teleurstellende resultaten te verbergen waar het gender-gevoelig maken van onderzoek betreft, gezien... (zie hieronder)
Hoe hebben de institutionele aspecten (structuren en cultuur) van de EC, en meer bepaald het naast elkaar bestaan van verschillende houdingen jegens gendergelijkheid als beleidsdoelstelling binnen de instelling, het proces beïnvloed?	... het mandaat van de EC om beleid voor te bereiden en tot uitvoering te brengen, om evaluaties van acties doen, kan leiden tot een tendens waarbij resultaten die niet positief zijn weggestopt worden. De EC lijkt onwillig om de institutionele aspecten die doeltreffend gender mainstreaming belemmeren uit de weg te ruimen.
Welke rol en ruimte was er voor individuele actoren?	Binnen de projecten werd doorgaans een 'GAP verantwoordelijke' aangeduid. Binnen de beperkingen van hun project en hun eigen mogelijkheden, werden inspanningen ondernomen door deze personen om gender in hun projecten te integreren.

Hoofdstuk 7. De casus in context: het directoraat-generaal Onderzoek voor, tijdens en na KP6

Waar en wanneer deden variabiliteit en onevenwichtigheid zich voor?	Prestaties leken veelbelovend bij de start van KP6, maar verminderden in de loop van het proces van de implementatiecyclus.
Hoe werd het doel van gendergelijkheid geconceptualiseerd? Waren er misverstanden over dit doel?	De 'gekrompen' aanpak van gendergelijkheid in uitvoering van KP6 werd structureel vastgelegd tijdens de planning van KP7.
Zijn er gevallen te vinden waar de diepgewortelde waarden en structuren worden vermeld en aangepakt?	Er werden geen dergelijke gevallen gevonden. Integendeel, waar duidelijk blijkt dat de institutionele structuren een doeltreffende gender mainstreaming in de weg staan, worden geen passende, corrigerende maatregelen genomen.
Werd gender mainstreaming aangepakt als een gefaseerd proces?	Ook voor KP7 ging een planningsfase de uitvoering vooraf. Echter, gezien de fasen overlaptten (KP6 uitvoering en KP7 voorbereiding), was de afbakening van de fasen onduidelijk en was het moeilijk om te lokaliseren wie verantwoordelijk was voor welke beslissing.
Werd er bij de planning van gender mainstreaming met alle actoren rekening gehouden? Werden er voldoende middelen voorzien?	De voorzieningen die voor KP7 werden gemaakt waren minder omvattend dan die in KP6 en voorzagen niet alle actoren van de nodige middelen.
Was er overleg met of betrokkenheid van middenveldorganisaties en/of gender experts?	Hoewel input structureel was voorzien, was de EC niet ontvankelijk voor input van experts ten tijde van KP6 en de voorbereidingen van KP7. Dit kan een teken zijn van institutionele weerstand tegen inmenging die mogelijk de eigen macht kan aantasten.
Waren er structuren voor verantwoording of harde stimuli?	Het gebrek aan interne structuren voor verantwoordingstelling versterkt de negatieve effecten die de organisationele aspecten ('de vloeibare bureaucratie') hebben op de gender mainstreaming strategie.
Welke uitingen van weerstand kunnen worden geïdentificeerd en hoe kunnen ze worden verklaard?	Klusters van weerstand kunnen bestaan en voortbestaan binnen de EC, afhankelijk van de mensen in machtsposities in die afdeling. De EC vertoont weerstand om institutionele belemmeringen tegen gender mainstreaming aan te pakken, evenals weerstand om met input van experts rekening te houden.
Hoe hebben de institutionele aspecten (structuren en cultuur) van de EC, en meer bepaald het naast elkaar bestaan van verschillende houdingen jegens gendergelijkheid als beleidsdoelstelling binnen de instelling, het proces beïnvloed?	De vloeibare bureaucratie verhindert het leren, het opbouwen van kennis, het gevoel van leiderschap over initiatieven, verantwoordingsmechanismen. Mensen komen en gaan; dit veroorzaakt veranderende situaties wat betreft allianties, kennis, motivatie, empowerment, en veranderende lokale attitudes tegenover gendergelijkheid als een beleidsdoelstelling. 'Opportuniteitsvensters' openen en sluiten gans de tijd.
Welke rol en ruimte was er voor individuele actoren?	Individen kunnen vorm geven aan de heersende lokale attitudes ten opzichte van verandering in genderverhoudingen, vooral als ze een machtspositie bekleden.

Curriculum Vitae

Lut Mergaert was born in Bruges, Belgium, on 21 April 1969. She completed her secondary education in 1987, having studied Latin-mathematics at the *Sint-Andreaslyceum* in Sint-Kruis. She then studied Applied Economic Sciences, specialization International Trade, in Antwerp at *UFSIA (University Faculties Sint-Ignatius Antwerp)*, where she obtained her licence degree in 1991. Her final dissertation was entitled 'Remuneration in the light of the corporate culture'. After having worked for one year as marketing assistant in a plastics manufacturing company, she started working as a consultant with *Yellow Window Management Consultants* in 1992. She still works at Yellow Window, where she is now partner (shareholder) and member of the management team. Her main focus is on decision-support studies for the public sector, with a specialization in gender-related subjects. From 2002 to 2003, Lut Mergaert followed post-academic Women's Studies 'Women and Politics: Theory, Policy and Media' for which she obtained the Certificate of successful completion (University of Antwerp).